

# “We do not Play Music for the Applause!”

Explorations of Andean autochthonous  
music as worlding practices in urban Bolivia

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is an exploration of Andean autochthonous music as a practice of decolonisation in the urban context of Bolivia. It follows the cultural, social, religious and political activities of different music groups who play autochthonous music in the city and the surrounding area of Cochabamba and La Paz. Following their stories it contrasts and contextualises these groups' journeys within the wider socio-political processes of Bolivian society. In this sense, my research follows Anders Burman's call for a move away from the 'critical intellectual theorizing' of decolonisation and towards a more practice-oriented approach to decolonisation. Music in this context is understood as a complex, interdependent and inherently situated practice that is in constant process of creating worlds.

The thesis dwells on the implications for academic knowledge production when we take seriously the claims, practices and experiences of those people we engage with in our research. The thesis thus explores the ramifications and importance of the claim made by autochthonous musicians that music is more than just an artistic performance, an aesthetic endeavour for applause or for political vindications. Doing so, the thesis problematizes the questions of authenticity, folklorisation and politics of recognition more broadly that are generally associated with Andean autochthonous music. The thesis seeks to take the experience and ideas of urban autochthonous musicians seriously by engaging with those worlds, and spiritual hinterlands that are invoked through Andean autochthonous music. The question then is not whether music can be an instrument of decolonisation. Rather the thesis asks: under what circumstances does music contribute to decolonisation and what kind of decolonisation processes does music bring about? In this sense, the project explores the possibilities and limitations of discourses and activities of the urban autochthonous music groups wherein Quechua and Aymara political vindications and the empowerment of Andean ways of knowing and being become possible.

Through the example of urban autochthonous music groups the thesis engages with the idea and the conditions of possibility necessary for social and political change. I suggest to look at music and autochthonous music in particular as sites of many worldings, where the pluriverse gets enacted and performed. The thesis' aim is to contribute to further our understanding of how the decolonial, post-colonial or

critical theoretical frameworks continue to perpetuate colonial structures and contribute to the further folklorisation and cooptation of the indigenous and other marginalised cultures and lived experiences rather than their liberation.

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## Acronyms

A.C.F.O.	<i>Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore de Oruro</i> (Association of Folklore Groups of Oruro)
AFCFA ‘San Miguel de Tiquipaya’	<i>Asociación de Fraternidades y Conjuntos Folklóricos-Autóctonos San Miguel de Tiquipaya</i> (Association of Folkloric-Autochthonous Fraternities and Groups San Miguel of Tiquipaya)
CIDOB	<i>Confederación Indígena del Oriente, Chaco y Amazonia de Bolivia</i> (Indigenous Confederation of Bolivian East, Chaco and Amazon)
CNMCI OB “BS”	<i>Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Originarias e Indígenas de Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa”</i> (National Confederation of Peasant, Originary and Indigenous Women of Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa”)
CONAMAQ	<i>Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu</i> (National Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu)
CSUTCB	<i>Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia</i> (Trade-Union Conferderation of Bolivian Peasant Workers)
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
MAS	<i>Movimiento Al Socialism</i> (Movement Towards Socialism)
MNR	<i>Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario</i> (Revolutionary Nationalist Party)
NPE	<i>Nueva Política Económica</i> (New Economic Policy)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been a visible change within Bolivian politics and society more broadly. Indigenous movements and organisations have taken centre stage. Through their political organisation and activities they have been rightly identified as the catalyst for social and political change. (Burman 2011) This political change went hand in hand with a movement to valorise and vindicate Indigenous cultures, ways of knowing and being in Bolivian society as a whole. Resulting in a growing presence of Indigenous movements, organisations and peoples within Bolivian politics and public sphere more generally. The increased visibility of the Indigenous organisations as active political and cultural agents further challenged the colonial narratives that depicted the Indigenous as passive and people without political, cultural and social agency. Moreover the cultural, religious and political manifestations of indigenous organisations, peoples and their allies showed how the denigration and marginalisation of Indigenous peoples culture, religious beliefs and ways of being and knowing were the result of colonial discourses and structures that continue to inform and shape the political, social and cultural landscape of Bolivia.

Indigenous organisations through their actions became the leading actors demanding political, economic and social change and the necessity to refound the state. A demand born out of the struggle for self-determination and self-governance by the Indigenous organisations and movements, who in their long fight recognised that the only way to achieve their aims was to reinvent the state and its institutions from within their own experiences. The conviction grew within Indigenous organisations that only a fundamental transformation of the state and of society could bring about the end of colonial structures, and mechanisms designed to keep them subjugated and oppressed in their place. (Garcés 2010) Proposing an ‘other-wise’ to neoliberalism, an ‘other-wise’ to more than of two hundred years of republican rule for the few at the cost of the many. It was precisely their anti-colonial actions and demands for decolonisation that evoked the possibility of and the aspiration within broad sectors of society that ‘another’ Bolivia was possible.

A Bolivia where the Indigenous peoples and society in general could take an active role in shaping the political system in which they were living. It was precisely their



capacities to organise, mobilise, and perhaps most importantly to articulate an alternative to the neoliberal discourse, that was at the heart of the success of the different popular uprising between 1990s and the early 2000s. Thus positioning the Indigenous organisations and Indigenous peoples, in the words of Pedro Portugal Mollinedo and Carlos Macusaya Cruz (2016, 24), as the “sujeto que aspira y lucha no solo por gobernarse a sí mismo, sino también por gobernar el país” (As subject that aspires and fights not only to govern itself, but also to govern the country). The question that Indigenous organisations set in the early 2000s was no longer *if Bolivia can change* but *how Bolivia would change*?

### 1.1. Research focus and aims

The thesis represents an effort to engage with this call for an ‘other-wise’ and ‘besides’ western centric modernity that is at the heart of the Bolivian process of change. The research follows the decolonial literature that saw in these demands a sign that a different world is possible.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, Mignolo (2007, 122) affirmed:

The events in Ecuador in the past 10 years, as well as those in Bolivia that culminated in the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia, are some of the most visible signs today of the de-colonial option, although de-colonial forces and de-colonial thinking has been in the Andes and Southern Mexico for five hundred years.

The Bolivian case became an example of how strong Indigenous movements based in their own experiences, cosmologies and philosophies are able not only to successfully subvert the political and economic order, but challenge the system itself, revealing the colonial condition of the everyday. Doing so, the thesis builds on Glen Sean Coulthard (2014, 13) argument that Indigenous organisations, and movements, their demands for change and propositions to decolonise move beyond mere politics of recognition and identity politics, because they are imbedded within particular cosmologies, as well as religious and cultural practices that are tied to the land. This

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance work by Betancur (2011), de Sousa Santos (2007, 2010), Hylton and Thomson (2007), Mignolo (2007, 2008), Quijano (2005, 2006a, 2006b), Restrepo and Rojas (2010), Walsh (2006).

is something that within mainstream approaches on Indigenous movements<sup>2</sup> has often been overseen or down played. As a consequence any call for change or decolonisation that remains on the level of recognition, or identity will not be able to succeed unless it also brings about the vindication and respect of the cosmologies of the different indigenous communities. The thesis suggests that if we seek to engage with the radical potentialities of the calls to decolonise, it is not enough to question our assumptions of how politics works, but instead, we also have question how we have come to understand the world itself.

The thesis thus problematizes the dominant frameworks of analysis concerning Indigeneity, social change and Bolivian politics, by considering how these approaches might implicitly continue colonial frameworks that silence and exclude Indigenous voices, traditions and ways of being and knowing from the realm of the 'sensible,' by relegating those practices into the realms of 'belief' and 'culture.' (De la Cadena 2010, 2015) In this sense, my research contributes to the emerging literature of the 'ontological turn' within post-colonial and decolonial schools of thought. In other words, the aim of this thesis is to ask what kind of experiences and ways of knowing the world are needed in order to make "our ontological pillars shiver" (Burman 2012, 117) and to subvert colonial modernity, in order to create a world that, in the words of the Zapatistas, becomes '*un mundo que quepan muchos mundos*,' 'a world that fits many worlds.'

Highlighting a more experience-based and 'grounded theory' approach, the aim of this thesis is to explore and map out how within a concrete example these calls for change and decolonisation are being thought of and implemented. Doing so, the research project seeks to move away from a theoretical and abstract critique and explanation of the different processes of decolonisation. In this sense, the thesis follows Albrow (2007, 2010b) call for a bottom up approach, that focuses on those experiences at the margins, in those in-between spaces where the large categories of Indigenous, *mestizo* do not always apply.

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<sup>2</sup> See for instance the work of Madrid (2005), Van Cott (2000a, 2000b), or Yashar (1999).



Figure 1: Satellite view of the valley of Cochabamba, Bolivia. (Google Earth 2018)

The thesis started as a journey exploring the different political and social strategies and practices that aim to transform society, especially those being produced from places like Tiquipaya<sup>3</sup> that are at the margins of the big cities (see Figure 1) and have over the past couple of decades witnessed a profound transformation from a rural village into a suburb of the ever-expanding city of Cochabamba. Cases like Tiquipaya exemplify the dramatic shift from a mostly rural and agricultural society towards an urban society. Although the urbanisation process is considered to be belated (Torrico 2013, 14), with the urban population ‘only’ surpassing the rural population during the 1980s, it is nevertheless significant as the numbers from the most recent census show. Over the past 65 years, Bolivia has experienced an enormous demographic explosion. According to the latest census in 2012, the population has increased from around 2.7 million inhabitants in 1950 to a little over 10 million in 2012. Over the same period, the urban population has grown by more than nine times, from around 700’000 inhabitants to over 6.7 million. Whereas Bolivia had a rural population in 1950 of 73.8% and only 26.2% lived in urban areas, by 2012, we find almost the

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<sup>3</sup> Tiquipaya is a village in the Third Section of the Province of Quillacollo and lies about ten kilometers northeast from the city center of Cochabamba.

reverse situation with a rural population of around 32.5% compared to an urban population of 67.5%. (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2015, 14)

The growth of urban spaces in places such as Tiquipaya and in particular of poor neighbourhoods throughout Bolivia is posing serious and unavoidable challenges to the way people, the different sectors, classes and ethnic groups view themselves and each other. What it means to be an *Aymara*, a *Quechua*, a *Mestizo*, is being renegotiated throughout Bolivia. As the ethnographic work of Albro (2000, 2010a, 2010b), Crabtree and Chaplin (2013), Rodríguez Ostría, Solares Serrano et al. (2009) shows, the abrupt urbanisation is bringing about a change of habits, practices and beliefs which blur the lines between categories and different social actors (see Chapter 4). These demographic and social shifts open the debate to question what these changes and decolonisation mean in spaces like Tiquipaya where different influences, cultures and peoples meet.

This project thus sets out to explore the tensions between the political and social project that emerge out of the Indigenous and social movements and the trends within society that seem to be actively contributing to an accelerated erosion of local Indigenous and peasant cultural, religious, social and political practices. Doing so, the thesis engages with the assumptions and claims of 'cultural and historical' erosion and erasure of different traditions and value systems associated with Andean and Amazonian ways of being, living and knowing. That is, the thesis is concerned with how ways of being, living and knowing that do not have western capitalist modernity as their locus of enunciation, but rather are situated within the experiences, anti-colonial struggles, world-views, cosmologies and ways of being and knowing of the different cultures and civilisations of the Andes and the Amazon basin are maintained and diffused within this rapid urbanisation.

Tiquipaya is an interesting starting point. Its inhabitants were, on the one hand, actively participating in the different social and political movements demanding deep political, economic and social transformation in the late 1990s and early 2000s and supporting the Indigenous movements' project of decolonisation. On the other hand, they were pushing for rapid urbanisation and increased capitalist development of the municipality. As I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 3, the population of Tiquipaya and the Cochabamba valley more broadly, have for centuries been described by the local elites as *mestizo*, a hybrid population slowly losing its Indigenous identity and cultural and religious practices, and on the way to becoming

a distinct cultural entity, neither fully 'Spanish' nor 'Indigenous.' (Bustamante Morales 2005) In particular, I was interested in those projects that were seeking to change society by highlighting and promoting values and ways of living and knowing based on the different cultures and civilisations of the Andes and the Amazon basin. Doing so, the aim is to explore the different "Bolivias" that were being invoked by local movements and organisations, and to ask what kind of strategies and mechanisms were being employed by these groups in order to bring about the changes they are seeking to bring about in their communities.



Figure 2: Members of the *Kurmi* on the Avenida Ecológica entering Tiquipaya to the sound of the *Jacha Sikus* (Big Pan flute). The picture was taken during the *Fiesta de San Miguel* on October 25 2014 by the author.

## 1.2. Urban autochthonous groups and the quest of decolonisation

During this research, I came across the *Encuentro Cultural Kurmi* (Cultural Encounter *Kurmi*, or *Kurmi* for short) of Tiquipaya, an urban autochthonous music group, who through their musical performances, have been promoting and vindicating autochthonous Andean music and ritual practices for the past two decades in the valleys of Cochabamba. I also met the umbrella organisation of urban autochthonous music groups of the city of Cochabamba, the *Organización de Comunidades, Centros*



*Culturales y Grupos Autóctonos - Ayllu Apu-Tunari* (Organisation of Communities, Cultural Centres and Autochthonous Groups - Ayllu Apu-Tunari, short Ayllu Apu-Tunari). In particular, the *Kurmi* and the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari's* proposition of practicing Andean autochthonous music as a means to bring about social and political change captured my attention. (see Figure 2)

By 'Andean autochthonous music' the groups understand musical traditions that originate from the different peoples, cultures and civilisations of the southern Andean region.<sup>4</sup> In general, Andean autochthonous music and the Andean wind instrument ensembles that play it are a "longstanding village tradition in the Southern Andean *altiplano*." (Rios 2012, 10) As such, I understand the contemporary groups and cultural communities who practice Andean wind instrument ensembles such as the pan flute (referred to as *siku*<sup>5</sup> in Aymara or *antbara* in Quechua) within the different urban areas of Bolivia to be members of an ongoing artistic, cultural, political and ritual practice. These practices have been shaped and conditioned by the social, political and historic context of their times.

Music, these groups suggested in our conversations, was more than just an artistic, political or cultural expression, as one interviewee later affirmed: "No se toca para que nos aplaudan"<sup>6</sup> (One does not play to be applauded). Rather, music emerged in the conversations as a school or a teacher, nurturing a different way of being, knowing and living in the city:

Por que a nosotros la música nos cría, ese es el principio, la música nos ha criado en un entorno urbano, si quieres. Nos ha ido criando con unos principios, con un corazón distinto al de todos no?<sup>7</sup>

This thesis is an investigation of the social and political implications of the practice of autochthonous music in urban areas. It is as an exploration of the political and social principles and values that are invoked and nurtured through the practice of Andean autochthonous music. In other words, this thesis explores what Andean autochthonous music is nurturing and how it nurtures this sensibility within the

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<sup>4</sup> For a more in detail description see Chapter 1 and 2.

<sup>5</sup> I use the term *siku* from here onwards, as it is the term that was employed by the groups I was working with.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with WF, 13.02.14

<sup>7</sup> Because music nurtures us, that is the principle, music has nurtured us in an urban context, if you want. It has nurtured us with a set of principles, with a heart that is different to the rest, right? (My translation) Interview with WF, 13.02.14.

urban autochthonous groups of Cochabamba. The thesis thus follows Turino's (2008a, 1) affirmation that

music is not a unitary art form, but rather that this term refers to fundamentally distinct types of activities that fulfil different needs and ways of being human. At a deeper level, I argue that musical participation and experience are valuable for the processes of personal and social integration that make us whole.

By engaging with autochthonous music practices, my work maps the relation between knowledge production and the structural continuities of colonial practices. In so doing, my thesis adds to the ongoing exploration of colonialism and colonial relations within Bolivian society. By focusing on the practice of music as a decolonial practice this project seeks to engage with movements and organisations seeking to construct a different Bolivia, one that values, cherishes and builds upon the different Indigenous ways on knowing, being and organising. The thesis, thus, explores how through the practice of Andean autochthonous music groups, such as those I worked with, are attempting change Bolivian society by invigorating and promoting Andean social practices and values.

This thesis questions the notion implicit in the statement that "one does not play to be applauded" that music, in this case Andean autochthonous music can be more than a cultural vindication, or an aesthetic expression. For this, I engage throughout the chapters with a broader debate that sees the practice of Andean music, rituals, and religious practices as 'enactments of cultural memory,' part of a 'symbolic and cultural discourse' or of cultural belief. (Postero 2010a) As such, this project questions the claim that a political project that calls for decolonisation based on Indigenous experiences, traditions, knowledges and ways of being cannot be more than just identity politics. The aim of this thesis is to challenge the idea that Indigenous politics and decolonisation turns mainly around cultural vindications and questions of identity and recognition. By exploring the claim 'to nurture music' this thesis seeks to map the relation between the music, ritual and activism. In order to achieve this, my work looks at the specificities of Andean musical traditions, in particular the relation between music, Andean ritual practices and understandings of relationality, complementarity and reciprocity. By situating the urban autochthonous groups within the wider social and political context of Bolivian society, the thesis studies how these groups are engaging with and building on the

political and social project of decolonisation led by Indigenous organisations. The focus on the relation between the practice of music and the activism of the urban autochthonous groups helps us to better understand the implications and tensions that are at the heart of the so-called ‘process of change’ in Bolivia.

### 1.3. The process of change and the quest to decolonise Bolivia

Since 2006 there have been social, economic and political changes brought forward by the *Movimiento al Socialismo* (Movement Towards Socialism, short MAS) since their electoral victory, such as the drafting the Constitution between 2006 and 2009 which grants unprecedented recognition and rights to Indigenous peoples and civil society more broadly. Moreover, there is a definite sense of being better off than a decade ago amongst the lowest sectors of society.<sup>8</sup> Despite all these advances, questions of structural inequality and exploitation against Indigenous and Afro-Bolivian people remain deeply rooted within society. There have also been a growing number of critical voices raising their concerns regarding the government’s handling and framing of Indigenous movements’ demands and interests.<sup>9</sup> Of particular importance is the delegitimisation and disarticulation of Indigenous organisations such as the *Confederación Indígena del Oriente, Chaco y Amazonia de Bolivia* (Indigenous Confederation of Bolivian East, Chaco and Amazon, short CIDOB) and the *Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu* (National Council of Ayllus and Markas of the Qullasuyu, short CONAMAQ). Other examples of worrying tendencies are the cooptation and instrumentalisation of the *Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (Trade-Union Conferderation of Bolivian Peasant Workers, short CSUTCB), or the *Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Originarias e Indígenas de Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa”* (National Confederation of Peasant, Originary and Indigenous Women of Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa,” short CNMCIQB “BS”). There is also growing concern over the state-led commodification and instrumentalisation of Andean and Amazonian peoples’ organisations, including their rituals, symbols and cultural traditions (Albro 2010a, Bridikhina 2010, Burman 2011, Canessa 2012,

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<sup>8</sup> This sense ‘of being better off’ is captured clearly by Crabtree and Chaplin (2013)

<sup>9</sup> See for instance special edition of *Latin American Perspectives* where authors such as Gustafson (2010), Howard (2010), Johnson (2010), Kohl (2010), Postero (2010a) present a critical overview of the political and social process in Bolivia up to that date.



Crabtree and Chaplin 2013, Mayorga 2016, Mújica Angulo 2017, Quispe 2011, Rivera Cusicanqui 2010a, Rojas 2013, Salman 2013, Winchell 2016).

The fact that the critique comes from the Indigenous organisations seems to be particularly surprising. Making these developments noteworthy as the electoral victory of the MAS, and crucially the political project put forward in the campaign leading to the elections in 2005 and repeated in all the subsequent electoral victories of the MAS, seemed to be deeply entangled with the demands and propositions put forward by these Indigenous organisations. As Nancy Postero (2010a) discusses in 2005, after years of social unrest and failing neoliberal reforms, the demand for change was at the centre of the election. And it was the MAS who played a crucial role, providing an electoral platform for all the demands and expectations that built up during the early 2000s and late 1990s. In this sense, she concludes that:

part of the reason Bolivia did not spin completely out of control in 2005 was that the MAS was an official political party with sufficient legitimacy to hold out the promise of a liberal but transformed state. This paved the way for its peaceful takeover of the state and its efforts to implement a transformative agenda. (Postero 2010a, 24).

This transformative agenda according to Benjamin Kohl and Rosalind Bresnahan (2010, 5) promised nothing less than “to ‘refund’ Bolivia as a twenty-first century intercultural, plurinational, socialist state[.]” In a similar sense, Bret Gustafson (2010) shows how the call for decolonisation was at the forefront of the leading political and social movements up to 2005. Comparably Benjamin Kohl (2010, 107) suggests that the expectations of Evo Morales Ayma and his government were very high. People expected “nothing less than a cultural recognition of excluded indigenous sectors, equitable economic development, and the creation of a new institutional order[.]”

Moreover, as Postero (2010a, 2007) and Kohl (2010) argue, it was precisely the capacity of the MAS to adopt and include the demands and propositions for change made by the Indigenous movement into political agenda of the MAS, was at the heart of its electoral success since 2005. In particular, the close links with the different Indigenous organisations, and social movements provided a legitimacy to the MAS allowing it to position itself as the only credible political force capable to implement the demands for change. This credibility was further enhanced because of the way

the MAS was organised and differentiated itself from classical parties. Postero (2010a, 23) affirms this when she writes that the MAS cannot be understood as a traditional party but [it is better understood as] the political instrument of the social movements that form its base. And that base is eclectic—campesinos, the landless movement, leftist lawyers, women's groups, some lowland indigenous leaders, and assorted Trotskyites.

In other words, the internal success as well as the international recognition of the MAS was deeply rooted within the particularities of the social unrest and popular mobilisations Bolivia went through from the late 1990s to early 2000s. As well as the proximity it claimed to have to the social movements, presenting itself as their political instrument. In other words, the MAS and Evo Morales Ayma were able set themselves into centre of the narrative as key actors. Allowing the MAS to captivate the trust of the electorate as well as the interest of academics and social commentators. Perhaps this is best captured by Postero (2007, 11) when she affirms: "All of us who have spent our academic careers studying racism and resistance to it have been incredibly moved by the events of the last few years in Bolivia." For her as for many others it was clear that the electoral victory of the MAS presented a unique opportunity.

The MAS and Evo Morales Ayma willingly took up the Indigenous cause and Indigenous imagery and often presented themselves as the face of the so-called 'process of change.' Showing themselves as the heirs of a long genealogy of anti-colonial fighters throughout history.<sup>10</sup> Postero (2010a, 19) for instance argued "the heart of the Morales revolution is indigenous empowerment: the main goal, he has said repeatedly, is to "refound the nation" and "decolonise" Bolivian society, and this appears to be main attraction for many in his indigenous political base." Similarly Kohl (2010, 107) saw in the election of Evo Morales Ayma the beginning of a new social order, set to dismantle the colonial structures and institutions when he writes:

This ascension to the presidency reflected the end of a particular Andean form of apartheid that had marginalized the majority indigenous population since the Spanish conquest. Symbolically, the election's impact is immense. Just as with Nelson Mandela in South

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<sup>10</sup> This point is developed in greater detail in chapter 2.

Africa, it reflects the end of dominance by a minority white elite and the accelerated integration of Bolivia's majority indigenous population into government.

As it will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, the MAS from their beginning attempted to consolidate an image of themselves as the leaders of the Indigenous cause in Bolivia as well as internationally. These efforts were accentuated by the systematic use of Indigenous imagery, symbols and ceremonies, through which they sought to affirm their Indigenous origins. This incorporation of Indigenous ceremonies, symbols and imageries by the president and the government has raised many critical voices.

For Carlos Macusaya Cruz (2014) as well as Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz (2016) the use of Andean and Amazonian ritual practices and symbols by the State are not only contributing to an exoticisation and co-optation of Indigenous people's cultural and religious practices, but are also enforcing a depoliticization and commodification of the Indigenous anti-colonial struggles that made the current 'process of change' possible to begin with. The work done by Andrew Canessa in particular shows how the pursuit for self-determination, as well as demands for economic, political and juridical autonomy by Indigenous organisations have been systematically undermined and replaced by elaborate and colourful displays and celebration of Indigeneity by the MAS government. Doing so the MAS has pushed a discourse of Indigeneity as Canessa (2012, 30) suggests that has become "rooted in symbols rather than community life or ritual practices [and] lends itself well to a discourse that can manipulate symbols such as the coca leaf or the *Pachamama* without necessarily rooting these into a particular way of life."

Canessa (2012, 15) further contrasts the use of Indigeneity within the MAS when he writes: "If much of the politics of indigeneity is about difference and recognizing the cultural and other rights of minority groups, Morales' government is asserting a very different vision of indigeneity: a homogeneous national culture for the majority." In Chapter 2 and 5, I develop this point showing how the Indigenous symbols, rituals, cultural practices are rendered void of any meaning and are being reemployed as part of new discourse of national identity. In this sense, when talking of a 'new Bolivia,' the question one has to ask, as Robert Albro (2010a, 72) affirms, has to be "what is this 'new Bolivia'?" What sort of society do the claims of change and decolonisation assume? He questions in particular the language and process of

legibility and identification implied by the discourse of change and decolonisation employed by the government and the new constitution. Drawing on James Scott (1998) he concludes that “state-driven processes of legibility, no matter how well-intentioned, inevitably involve choices among codified simplifications—legal descriptions—that are potentially destructive of certain kinds of local knowledge or ways of being indigenous.” (Albro 2010a, 73) Albro, here, calls into question attempts to generalise and homogenise the different experiences within Bolivian society in general and the indigenous experience in particular. The problem for him lies in how the diversity and plurality that were such a key mark of the mobilisations, the movements, the organisations and networks are reduced and homogenised. As a result, he argues that one risks to miss the “particular political dynamic while stripping away the ways in which political work regularly moves back and forth among frames of indigenous and mestizo identity that make that work possible and that loomed large in the successful indigenous-popular mobilizations during the early 2000s in Bolivia.” (Albro 2010a, 85) Albro’s warning is important, and similar to issues raised by Andrew Canessa (2007, 2012). Both authors highlight the difficulties and dangers implicit to any discussion of identity and indigeneity existent in the Bolivian context, particularly when one talks about decolonisation. Albro’s detailed account of local politics of the city of Quillacollo shows that there are no clear cut lines around which the different identities of different social and ethnic groups can be identified. He stresses the danger of any attempt to generalise in particular when it comes through laws and institutional behaviour, he suggests:

begs the questions of misrecognition and of the legibility of indigenous experience vis-à-vis even a well-meaning state, particularly for people living in marginal urban environments such as Quillacollo or El Alto, and for whom indigenous identity is at once personally relevant, a politically relevant heritage, but not necessarily recognizable in territorial or even collective terms. (Albro 2010b, 4)

The call for decolonisation, as it is expressed by the new Constitution and the MAS government Albro warns, risks silencing and downplaying the intrinsic diversity implicit to the mobilisations in the early 2000s. Albro, thus, affirms that the way decolonisation and change are discussed, erases the radical potentiality inherent to the mobilisation that made the rise of Evo Morales even possible. The implications expand beyond the discursive or identity level as Canessa (2012, 22) suggests:

Morales successfully articulated a set of issues and interests such as gas and justice as indigenous ones, which got him elected on a broad platform, but he has then moved to subordinate all indigenous interests to that of the state. His performance of state ritual in archaeological sites and apparently innocuous events such as mass marriages are actually important in his construction of a state based on indigenous legitimacy but which, paradoxically, subordinates indigenous interests.

In other words, decolonisation seems to be reduced to a symbolic and cultural discourse that pushes questions of recognition, identity and cultural affirmation as part of a new nation building project, rather than engaging in debates about emancipation, self-governance, self-determination and redistribution. As a result, rituals and symbols become identity markers that allow the government to showcase their indigenous roots without having to engage with the particular experiences and ways of life these practices and symbols are rooted in. Decolonisation in Bolivia, at least as it is presented by the MAS has become part of a symbolic and cultural discourse that seeks to establish a new national culture as Canessa (2012, 15) suggests:

This is not simply an infusion of Andean indigenous rituals into state ritual but surely an attempt to create a new national culture based on indigenous principles. It is somewhat reminiscent of the nation building movement of many Latin American States, starting with Mexico after the Revolution, which attempted to create a new national culture based on mestizo people, culture and values. In this case the nation is imagined as indigenous.

It is precisely this tension between the political and social projects calling for a deep transformation of society and the state and the trends within the government and broader sectors of society that seemingly are reintroducing homogenising structures and mechanism of exclusion and oppression that is at the heart of this research project. In this regard, Webber similarly to Canessa above, argues that the MAS abandoned the radical transformative project in favour of more reformist and state centric policies but for him this is associated with:

the relative decline in the self-organisation and self-activity of the popular classes in the wake of Morales' victory – a President who

seemed to represent their interests –, and the common phenomenon of social movements draining themselves of their transformative energies, organisation, and capacity to build popular power from below in workplaces and communities when they adopt a pre-eminently electoral focus. (Webber 2011, 329)

As a consequence, Webber maintains that the social forces at the forefront, calling for change and the refounding of the Bolivian state and society were pushed into the background. For Webber (2011, 328) the path towards an electoral victory of the MAS in December 2005, was a first move away from the “socialist and indigenous-liberationist revolution growing out of the revolutionary epoch of 2000–5.” This became evident during my fieldwork, where I had several conversations with local politicians in my hometown of Tiquipaya, who each pointed to the discrepancies between what people expected and what had been demanded by the movements and their leaders (many of whom were now in the local and national governments). They highlighted that there had been a strong assumption amongst politicians, as well as academics and supporters of the so-called ‘process of change,’ that once they managed to take control of the state and its institutions and started to implement the changes they were campaigning for, society would adapt and people would slowly and almost automatically be transformed and engage in this ‘process of change.’

Indeed, the strong popular participation in the revolt against neoliberal regimes and the decisive electoral victories in places like Tiquipaya—where the MAS won comfortably all elections from 2004 to 2014—seemed to suggest that the call for decolonisation and social transformation was well anchored within society. But what has happened is something different. Rather than consolidating demands for an alternative economic and political system which inspired popular movements involved in the Water War in 2000 or the Gas War in 2003, many local politicians complained that people were pushing for increased urbanisation and commercialisation of the village, and with it bringing a deep the transformation of the village. People wanted to increase the value of their lands and sell it to land developers, who in turn started building condominiums everywhere. Thus, instead of moving away from capitalist modernity, through their demands people were intensifying the urbanisation and gentrification of the area, demanding larger roads and more retail and business zones. Many *Tiquipayaños*, most of whom had spent their entire lives in Tiquipaya and had seen the place develop from a small village mainly

dedicated to agriculture into a suburb, enclosed by the city of Cochabamba. With it according to many inhabitants came a deterioration of social relations and communal decision-making processes.

The case of Tiquipaya is by no means a unique case, rather it is but one among many that illustrate the problems, contradictions but also the achievements the so-called process of change brought with itself. It illustrates how the decolonisation of social and economic relations and with it the project of refounding the Bolivian state, is anything but an automatic process set in motion by changes at the level of the state. The process of decolonisation is not just about transforming economic and political structures through constitutional changes or governmental policies, but is deeply intertwined with what is deemed desirable and what is not; with the aspirations of different sectors of society and the political, social and cultural imaginaries that inform their decision-making process.

The work of Gustafson (2010), Howard (2010), Johnson (2010), Postero (2007, 2010a) clearly reveals the dangers and limitations inherent to the approaches the government of the MAS have taken with regards to the question of decolonisation. As the discussion above shows, the debate of decolonisation is deeply intertwined with questions of recognition, internal and external identification process but also with questions redistribution. The discussion shows how Indigenous symbols, imageries and ceremonies are employed by the government to affirm a new national culture, raising concerns of cultural cooptation and commodification. But doing so, their analysis risks to overemphasise the role of the MAS, Evo Morales Ayma or that of Alvaro García Linera. The motivations and reasonings of the so-called 'base' are rendered secondary, their motivations and decision making process are invisibilised. In particular, the relation towards the rituals is pushed to the realm of belief, very little effort is done to understand how the rituals and the cosmological features inform and shape the different decision making processes within this so-called 'base.' My time with the *Kurmi* in Tiquipaya and other urban autochthonous music groups in Cochabamba and La Paz further highlighted this disconnect between study of the process of change in Bolivia and lived experiences of the population. In this sense, the thesis questions how we go about within academia, thinking and writing about the claims for change and decolonisation in particular when ritual and cosmological features are raised? What is being lost when rituals are being reduced to the realm of the symbolic and belief in our analysis? To do so, Burman (2010, 2011) argues

limits our capacity to understand how and why the different movements and organisation act. In his analysis of ritual practices and Aymara activism he concludes that by reducing the rituals and the cosmological features to realm of belief and identity politics, one risks to lose sight of what inspires, shapes and makes intelligible the demands for change and decolonisation in the first place. Moreover he claims to do so:

could lead us to overlook the significance of indigenous criticisms of colonial modernity and the dimensions of meaning that are inherent, reproduced, generated, and catalysed in the articulation of these criticisms. Moreover, it could lead us to disregard not only the existential intensity that imbues the process of “emergent indigeneities,” but also the insurrectionary horizons that are envisioned therein. Finally, it could lead us to think of ritual practice and cosmological knowledge as apolitical, obsolete practices and notions without any importance in the contemporary Aymara quest for decolonization. Nothing would be more erroneous. (Burman 2010, 472)

Thus, the thesis is not so interested in further analysing the governments discourse, rather the research is focused on how the rituals and symbols are being made sense of and are part of the decision making process. The thesis is a journey, exploring the political, social, cosmological imaginaries that inform the *Kurmi* and other urban autochthonous when they claim to nurture and music, through the sound of Andean wind instruments, such as the *pinkillu* (a type of duct flute made out of wood or bamboo) and the *siku*. By focusing on the practice of autochthonous music, this research project seeks to chart what kind of decolonial politics, relations and aspirations might be possible in the realm of decolonization within urban Bolivia.

#### **1.4. Methodology and fieldwork**

The project does not seek to provide an exclusive or detailed account and analysis of the different autochthonous music groups and their intricate internal workings. Rather, the fieldwork and the thesis were driven by the different interactions that occurred over time, following an open and participative research framework. The



information used in this thesis was obtained mostly through open-ended interviews as well as participatory observations. In this sense, I started my fieldwork with a very broad approach to mapping the relationships between music and politics within the context of decolonisation in Bolivia. Over the course of my fieldwork between July 2013 and May 2014, with a short follow-up trip in October 2014, the focus shifted towards autochthonous music and in particular towards urban autochthonous musicians and their festivities as well as political activities. Given both time and economic constraints, the fieldwork was limited mostly to Tiquipaya and the city of Cochabamba, with some occasional visits to La Paz where I was able to attend a couple of regional meetings between urban and rural autochthonous groups. A full list of interviews and research activities can be found in Appendix 1.

The main focus of my fieldwork research revolved around the experiences of the *Kurmi* of Tiquipaya in Cochabamba as well as the umbrella organisation of Cochabamba, the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. The research was done in close coordination and support of the *Kurmi*, as well as of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and many of its 15 active member groups. This proximity and cooperation provided me with great access to the broad network of urban autochthonous music groups and their experiences, which serve as the foundation for the different chapters. In this sense, each chapter has to be read as a meditation on dominant themes that emerged out of the many conversations, interviews and participatory observations I conducted during my fieldwork visits in Bolivia, rather than as an ethnographic or sociological account of the groups, their composition and their activities.

As a result, this thesis takes the reader through the journey of discovery, deconstruction and attempts at decolonisation that I have gone through over the period of this research. Each chapter is an effort to cultivate relations that help me to think through issues of colonisation, racial discrimination and folklorisation, but also to explore the necessary conditions – material and otherwise – to enact a different world. The thesis constantly seeks to explore what it means theoretically and methodologically to take the claim ‘to nurture music’ seriously? Each chapter represents an effort to engage with the different dimensions that are implied within the notion ‘to nurture music.’ The thesis follows Rodolfo Kusch’s (2010, 1) research project of looking “for a formulation closer to our own lives.” Mignolo, in his introduction to the English translation of Kusch’s (2010) book ‘Indigenous and Popular Thinking in América’, described Kusch’s approach in the following way:

Kusch's original move was to throw himself in the water and think while swimming for survival. That is, his entire work is a constant struggle to detach himself from a theological and ego-logical philosophical foundation and instead to think in and from the subjectivities constructed in colonial histories. Or, if you wish, his reflections are a constant detachment and removal from the modern subject (theological and ego-logically secular), so as to embrace the constitution of a (de-)colonial subject, geopolitically (colonial and imperial locations) and body-politically (racialized and gendered or sexualized bodies). (Mignolo 2010, xlvi)

The following chapters thus reflect the ongoing processes of mapping and relating. Rather than seeking any truths, they are written with the intention of problematising my own assumptions and, more broadly, dominant ideas about the world, colonialism, music and Bolivian society. Each one explores in its own way the possibilities, conditions and difficulties of thinking 'other-wise' and beside colonial modernity.

### **1.5. Thesis structure**

The second chapter starts with the inauguration of Evo Morales Ayma in January 2006 in an attempt to capture the significance of the election of Bolivia's first Aymara president. In order to do so, the chapter looks at how Indigenous peoples were systematically denied political agency and their humanity as part of the Western colonial enterprise aiming to subjugate and exploit the local populations. Hence, the chapter situates the debates of decolonisation and the experiences of the *Kurmi* and *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* within the wider colonial context. The chapter then goes on to discuss how, despite the claims and attempts by the current government to dismantle colonial logics of exclusion and oppression, Indigenous peoples and their culture remain marginalised and denigrated within society and in many cases by the state and its institutions. The last part of the chapter looks at the conceptual and ontological limitations of the government's approach to decolonisation by engaging with works of Pedro Portugal Mollinedo and Carlos Macusaya Cruz (2016), Mario Blaser (2013b, a), Robbie Shilliam (2015, 2017), Rolando Vazquez (2017, 2012),

Bikrum Gill (2015, 2016) and Enrique Dussel (2008b, a). As a result, the chapter engages with the ideas put forward by the 'ontological turn' in postcolonial and decolonial scholarship and suggests that, in order to be able to take seriously claims such as 'to nurture and be nurtured by music', it is necessary to question our underlying assumptions of how the world works and what the world is. Otherwise we just risk reproducing the same structures and mechanisms that have been at the heart of the colonial experience of the past 500 years.

The third chapter discusses how urban autochthonous groups in the Bolivian Andes have to be understood as part of wider social, historical and political phenomena which are deeply intertwined with different indigenous movements, organisations and struggles. It does so closely examining urban autochthonous music groups such as the *Kurmi* and the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. The chapter describes the origins of the *Kurmi* and begins to map how members of the group make sense of autochthonous music and how these perceptions have changed over time. It also shows how the *Kurmi* in particular, and the urban autochthonous groups more generally, are part of what one could call a worlding process, where an 'Andean' world is being evoked and 'worlded' with each performance and event within an urban space that is broadly perceived as being foreign and colonised.

Chapter four takes as its starting point my observations in a small village south of Tiquipaya, where the *Kurmi* took part in an event with residents in the Province of Loayza (La Paz). The chapter is an attempt to problematise how the particular *mestizo* identity of the valley inhabitants of Cochabamba has been created and perpetuated over time, in an effort to better understand the origins, mechanisms and structures that are shaping contemporary discourses of change and decolonisation. The chapter does so by engaging with historiographical and anthropological literature, in particular the work of Brook Larson (1998), Gose (2001), Susan Ramírez (1998), Thierry Saignes (1995, 1999), Heidi Scott (2009) and Steve Stern (1993). Drawing on the work of historians working on the conquest and the colonial period as well as on more contemporary ethnography, this chapter revisits the categories of Indigenous, *mestizo*, and how urban-rural divide was constituted within Cochabamba. By engaging with the history of the region and its people, the chapter proposes a counter-historical narrative, where the role of indigenous populations is highlighted. In doing so, it shows how the categories of indigeneity and *mestizaje* are the result of often intertwined and overlapping historical processes. Moreover, the

chapter suggests that any Andean worlding processes necessarily have at their centre the historic, centuries-old struggle for survival by the different local populations. These people are constantly reinventing themselves in the light of colonial and capitalist oppression and exploitation, and in turn shaping the colonial elites' actions and strategies.

Emphasising the importance and role of patron saint festival, the chapter five develops a framework to understand the different social processes, challenges and responses that are currently being articulated within society in general, and urban autochthonous groups more specifically. The chapter focuses on the importance of music and dance within the context of patron saint festivals and other religious and ritual events of the festive cycles. It moves beyond understanding such festivities as entertainment or as a soundscape of social life within the Andean context of Bolivia. Rather, by engaging with the work of authors like Thomas Abercrombie (1992), Ximena Córdova Oviedo (2012), Marcelo Lara Barrientos (2007), Javier Romero Flores (2013, 2015), Xavier Albó and Matías Preiswerk (1986), David Guss (2006) and Daniel Goldstein (2004, 2006) the chapter demonstrates how both music and dance are key elements that accompany social, political, economic and religious practices over time and space. It shows that historically the religious festivities in the Andes have been sites where power can be asserted and perpetuated, as well as questioned and subverted. As such their development and transformations provide us with a unique perspective on the different political and social processes that have shaped and continue to shape Bolivian society. In particular, the chapter analyses how the patron saint festivals have become the cornerstones of Bolivian identity and its dances the image of Bolivia's cultural production. The chapter traces the idea of authenticity and representation of dances such as the *Tinku* in an effort to understand what kind of nation is being performed on the streets of Tiquipaya, Cochabamba Oruro or La Paz.

The sixth chapter looks at the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and the urban autochthonous groups of Cochabamba as a cultural and social movement that emerged in the late 1970s. In particular, it looks at how music helped the groups to overcome their differences and create the umbrella organisation in 2012. The chapter engages with the different claims made by many musicians that the practice of Andean autochthonous music not only helped them connect with other musicians, but rather became a medium that helped to nurture the principles of community, reciprocity, complementarity and

relationality. In order to do so, the chapter explores, through the works of Hans van den Berg (1990), Ina Rösing (1994), Astvaldur Astvaldsson (2000), Henry Stobart (2006, 2010a), Arnaud Gérard (2010c, a), Thomas Turino (1993), Josef Estermann (2006), Eduardo Grillo Fernández (1998) and Grimaldo Rengifo Vásquez (1998), how the autochthonous music itself, its mechanics, the performances as well as the religious and ritual contexts within which music and dance take place are executed in the Andean context. In particular, I look at the *tarka* instrument and the Andean carnival performance called the *Anata*. The chapter explores what kind of worlds are engraved into the instruments and the construction of the sounds itself, in an effort to map the worlding process that music can nurture.

The thesis in this sense, argues that Andean autochthonous music is an inherently communal, complex, interdependent, and historically and politically situated social and ritual practice. This makes music an important tool of decolonization—not just a social and political vindication but also as a worlding practice that invokes, transmits and nurtures the core values and principles of reciprocity, relationality, complementarity and equivalence of the Andean cosmology. In this sense, the practice of autochthonous music reproduces and nurtures a world that has its foundations set in the different Andean peoples and cultures, their experiences, their religious practices and their ways of understanding and making sense of the world itself. The activities and performances of urban autochthonous music groups show that decolonization is not just a task of large institutional and structural change it is also process of changing the way people relate to each other and the world that surrounds them, in an effort to promote communal practices and relations of reciprocity and complementarity on a daily basis.

## Chapter 2: Worlding in spite of colonial modernity

Pinkilluq waqayninqa munayllatamin k'ancharin, sunquta ch'allallaq nichispa llaphuyarichin ari chaywanpuni kawsakunchik. Machulakuna tiyukuna, pinkillutaqa tukuy sunquwan phukunku, maaay ukhumanta qhaparichkaqta paqarichimunku ah (metiendo aire y tocándose su vientre wanka una pinkillada) wayayayyyyyy waya waya wayayayay waya waya wayayy wayayayayy way way yayyyy nispa maaay ukhuman chinkarquchipullankutaq ah wañurquchipunku (señalando la profundidad de la tierra).<sup>11</sup> (Flores Flores 2016, 172)

Bueno, justamente decía [que] la música es una expresión que expresa una forma de vida. Es un lenguaje la música. Lo que yo he entendido es que realmente nace de lo ritual. Entonces, a partir de eso, la sociedad también se ha ido expresando desde esa ritualidad en las relaciones humanas, no solamente antes ¿no? [Relaciones] con todo, con la tierra, con la Pachamama, con todos los seres vivos. Que la misma tierra está viva, [como] los animales, las plantas y en esa forma de relacionarse [también está] la música. Justamente cuando [uno] va aprendiendo este lenguaje y va entrando [en él], le va abriendo el conocimiento y los saberes de nuestros abuelos, de nuestros ancestros y, al mismo tiempo, va tomando, uno, más conciencia y reforzando su identidad.<sup>12</sup>

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11 The sound of the pinkillu is very beautiful and dazzling, it makes the heart explode into pieces, and moves [touches, softens, calms] it. The grandfathers and male adults play the pinkillu with all their heart, they draw the sounds from the fuuurthst depths of their being [pues]. (Inhaling air and touching her stomach she sang a pinkillada).

wayayayyyyyy waya waya wayayayay waya waya wayayy wayayayayy way way yayyyy saying, they also make [the sounds/voices] disappear [get lost] in the depths [pues]. They make them disappear, [they make them die] (Showing to the depths of the earth). (My translation)

12 As I was saying, music is an expression that expresses a way of life, music is a language. What I have learned is that it really is born of the ritual [context]. In that sense, it is from there that society has also expressed itself through that ritual in its human relations, not just in the past, ¿no? [its relations] with everything, with the earth, with the Pachamama, with all living beings. [One learns] that the earth itself is living, [like] the animals, the plants and in that way of relating music. Precisely when one goes on to learn this language, and one begins to enter, it begins to open its teachings and the knowledge of our grandparents, or our ancestors and at the same time one begins to take consciences and to reinforce one's own identity. (My translation) Interview with VCM 02.04.2014

On the morning of 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2006, the sound of the *pinkillu* provided the soundscape for the growing crowd of spectators that were gathering at the ruins of Tiwanaku on the Bolivian highland plateau. Thousands of people had come together to witness the first self-identifying Indigenous president hold a series of rituals and ceremonies of inauguration on the door steps of the famous *Kalwasaya* temple ruins. Calling into being a new age, the beginning of a new cycle, invoked through the *pachakuti* (the turn of time).

This chapter discusses what is at stake, what kind of political and social imaginaries are being dreamed when the sound of the *pinkillu*, the *sikus* and the *tarkas*, are played. It seeks to understand the realm of the possible, the realm of the decolonial within Bolivia, and the tensions and contradictions that constitute it. In doing this, the aim of the chapter is to demonstrate how the contradictions and complexities are constitutive parts of people's reality and should not therefore be ignored or rendered invisible within our academic and social science based analysis.

The chapter starts by outlining the significance of the election of Evo Morales Ayma as the first Indigenous president of Bolivia, by situating it within wider debates of how Indigenous peoples were over the course of the past five hundred years denied their agency, capacity to think, to be citizens and to be humans. In doing so the chapter provides a brief outline on how the necessity to decolonise Bolivia was constructed within society over time. The second section looks through the experience of urban autochthonous musicians so as to understand how Indigenous people as well as cultural and ritual practices continue to be discriminated and denigrated, and how music is being thought of as a way of decolonisation by urban autochthonous musicians. In the third and fourth sections the chapter explores the political, conceptual and ontological limitations of the government's conceptualisation of decolonisation. In the last section, I bring these different sections together by discussing how underlying assumptions of how we think the world works, and what the world is, influences our capacity to understand and make sense of ceremonies such as the one in 2006 mentioned earlier or musical performances by autochthonous musicians. This allows me to outline a number of propositions to start rethinking what decolonisation means.

## 2.1. Moments of decolonisation and ongoing colonialism

The sound of the *pinkillu* flute with its characteristic vibrant, husky and ‘rich multiphonic texture’ (Stobart 2006, 214) is perhaps the dominant component of the Andean festive soundscape during the rainy and crop growing season between All Saints (*Todos Santos*) at the beginning of November through to the celebrations of Saint Sebastian in the second half of January and the Candlemas at the beginning of February up to feasts of Carnival or *Anata/Phujllay* between February and March. The *pinkillus* are classified by ethnomusicologists as part of the aerophone instruments. The term *pinkillu* refers both to the specific instrument as well as to a family of duct flutes made from a range of materials such as *toqoro*, a type of bamboo that grows in the Amazon basin, to different types of wood. (Gérard A 2010c, 69) Similarly to most Andean wind instruments, the *pinkillu* are generally played in *tropas*. *Tropas* are, as Fernando Rios (2012, 11) explains:

made up of a single family of melody-producing wind instruments, either one kind of panpipe (e.g., *siku*, *ayarachi* or *jula-jula*), end-notched flute (e.g., *kena* or *phusipía*), duct flute (e.g., *tarka*, *pinkillu* or *mohoceño/musiñu*) or side-blown flute (known variously as *pífano*, *phala*, *flauta* or *pitu*), and are usually accompanied by percussion (e.g., *bombos*, *wankaras*, *cajas*).

As Rios goes on to note, the practice of music in the Andes distinguishes itself from other musical traditions because of its inherently communal nature. This is reflected in the way the wind instruments are played and the global sound it produces.

Neither stringed instruments nor soloistic display form part of this village tradition. Each wind player in the *tropa* realizes roughly the same melody, in unison and/or parallel intervals (e.g., octaves, fifths, fourths), producing a dense rather than transparent timbre, largely because the winds traditionally are non-tempered and exhibit considerable tuning variance. (Rios 2012, 11)

Music brings together not only the members of the village, but connects different communities across the region, during the patron saint festivals, Carnival and other religious festivities. Andean music, as the second quote in the epigraph of this chapter asserts, is an essential part of the wider ritualistic and cosmological practices of the Andean worlds. As I will discuss in more detail throughout the thesis, the instruments



and the melodies are not just deeply imbedded within, but in many cases, are constitutive ritual elements that maintain the ritual and agricultural cycles of life (see Chapter 6). Through their melodies and sounds, the musicians invoke the favours and assistance by blowing life and courage (*valor*) into the *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) and the *Apus*, *Achachilas*, *Awichas*, *Awkis* (the ancestor keepers of the surrounding mountains and sacred places as well as of the plants and animals). As an Aymara musician asserted to me in an interview “No es pues tocar nomás, no es cualquier cosa.”<sup>13</sup> Later in the interview he explained they play to bring life back not just to plants and animals but also to the *Achachilas*, the divine entities of the Andes. In this sense, the different sounds of the instruments and the melodies played, as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 6, are not just associated with different climate conditions and stages of agricultural production, but music is part of the mechanisms and practices that bring about the different cycles of life and death. In particular, the melodies of the *wayñus* played on the *pinkillus*, as Stobart (2010a, 205) observes, invoke “el verde paisaje de los ancestros en el mundo de los vivos, para animar a los cultivos de los chacras y para que crezcan durante las lluvias.”<sup>14</sup> Music conjures up lands of abundance, it infuses life and courage into the plants, animals, humans and the divine ancestors often referred to as *Apus*, *Achachilas*, *Awichas* or *Awkis*. Music invokes the different cycles of life and death, bringing together the different worlds of human and divine entities inhabiting the landscape and conjuring up the harmony between these different worlds.

Thus it should come as no surprise that during what has to be seen as one of the most significant political and social events of the past half century, the sound and melodies of the *pinkillus* alongside other Andean autochthonous instruments provided the sonic background to the ceremonial inauguration of Evo Morales Ayma, the first self-identifying Aymara president of Bolivia. A ceremony held on the 21 of January 2006 on the sacred ruins of the *Kalasasaya* temple in Tiwanaku that proclaimed him the leader of the indigenous peoples of Bolivia. The ceremony and rituals were broadcast to the world and provoked an array of reactions within Bolivia and across the world. In Spain, *El País* (2006) wrote: “En un acto sin precedentes y cargado de

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<sup>13</sup> “You don’t just play, it is not just anything.” (My translation) Interview with NM 02.04.2014  
Nemesio Marianaku Kalamani native to the village of Taypi Ayca, is a *maestro* of the *Sikuri de Italaque*. As such he is one of the main advocates for Andean autochthonous music in the city of La Paz.

<sup>14</sup> “the green landscape of the ancestors in the land of the living, in order to encourage the crop in the chacras, so that they grow during the rains.” (My translation)

simbolismo, previo a su investidura como presidente del país, Evo Morales ha sido proclamado esta tarde máxima autoridad india de Bolivia en una ceremonia mística dirigida por sacerdotes de todas las etnias del país[.]”<sup>15</sup> The Mexican newspaper *La Jornada* (Gomez 2006) described the ceremony along similar lines:

Todos fueron bienvenidos y pudieron gozar del espectáculo y del cariño orgulloso de los indígenas bolivianos. Danzas, música y mantas de las diversas organizaciones alegraron durante varias horas el ambiente.

Y todos aguardaron hasta poco después del mediodía, cuando un sol cómplice de su alegría se dejó ver entre las nubes. Por un costado de la vieja y casi derruida pirámide de Akapana llegó "el Evo".

El ritual empezó con la purificación del mandatario y el cambio de ropas: Evo Morales fue investido casi como inca.<sup>16</sup>

The election of Evo Morales in late 2005 was seen as a turning point, not just for the Bolivian State, but for the entire Region, consolidating a trend towards the left that had taken over the majority of countries in Latin America. The *New York Times* (Forero and Rohter 2006) saw the rise to power of Evo Morales Ayma as perhaps “the hardest turn yet in South America’s persistent left-leaning tilt, with the potential for big reverberations far beyond the borders of this landlocked Andean nation.” The article focused on the economic and political implications of the reforms promised throughout Evo Morales Ayma’s election campaign, and described the ceremony on the ruins of Tiwanaku in a more concise manner:

“On Saturday, in a ceremony attended by tens of thousands of Aymara and Quechua Indians at this archaeological site some 14,000 feet above sea level, Mr. Morales donned the replica of a 1,000-year-old tunic similar to those once used by Tiwanaku’s wise men, was

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<sup>15</sup> In an act without precedent and full of symbolism, and in the wake of his investiture as president of the country, Evo Morales has been proclaimed this afternoon the highest indian authority of Bolivia in a mystic ceremony conducted by priests of the different ethnic groups of the country[.] (My translation)

<sup>16</sup> Everyone was welcome and was able to enjoy the spectacle and the proud affection of the Bolivian Indigenous peoples. Dances, music and the banners of the different organisations cheered up the atmosphere during several hours.

Everyone waited until a little bit after midday, when a sun complicit with their happiness let it self be viewed from within the clouds. From one side of the old and almost collapsed pyramid of Akapana ‘el Evo’ arrived.

The ritual started with purification of the head of state and the change of clothes. Evo Morales was inaugurated almost like an Inka. (My translation)

purified in an ancient ritual and accepted the symbolic leadership of the myriad indigenous groups of the Andes.” (Forero and Rohter 2006)

The ceremony of Evo Morales Ayma with its ‘ancestral’ rituals of purification and performed on thousand year old ruins, carried an immense symbolic power. For many the event figuratively marked the culmination of a long social, political and economic struggle that had defined the previous decades of Bolivian politics. However, more than the social and economic implications of the electoral victory of Evo Morales Ayma, perhaps the ceremony brought to the forefront in a powerful manner the ongoing colonial condition within which Bolivia found itself, as the BBC News coverage highlighted:

On Saturday, Mr Morales made a private offering to Pachamama, or Mother Earth, of sweets, wine and flowers, before moving to the pre-Inca temple of Kalasasaya.

There, barefoot and dressed as a sun priest and in front of thousands of supporters, he received the baton, encrusted with gold, silver and bronze, that will symbolise his Indian leadership.

The BBC’s Daniel Schweimler in Bolivia says the ceremony was requested by Bolivia’s indigenous community, which feels it has had a raw deal ever since the Spanish conquistadores colonised the region more than 500 years ago. (BBC News 2006)

As Robert Albrow (2006, 420) remarks, the political project of the MAS spearheaded by Evo Morales Ayma and Alvaro García Linera, began in defiance of the “post-1985 state-driven neoliberalism and the popular responses to it.” The elected president made no secret of the significance of the moment during his speech at the ceremony, and of the significance of the sweeping electoral victory of the MAS in December 2005, declaring a change in the way the country would be governed. The election of a self-identified Aymara, has to be read, as Catherine Walsh (2006, 30) argues, as “un vuelco histórico, geopolítico, social, ético e intelectual, un giro radical basado en una visión o imaginario “otro”, construido a partir de siglos de lucha[.]”<sup>17</sup> Bolivia, as she remarks, was built from the beginning on the colonial structures that

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<sup>17</sup> “a historical, geopolitical, social, ethical and intellectual overturn, a radical turn based on an ‘other’ vision or imaginary, built out of centuries of struggle[.]” (My translation)

discriminated and excluded indigenous and poor sectors of society. In this sense, up until Evo Morales Ayma, Bolivia was “un país de mayoría indígena [...] donde el poder del Estado siempre ha estado en las manos de la q’ara (los blanco-mestizos)”<sup>18</sup> (Walsh 2006, 30). The picture of Evo Morales standing barefoot and with his traditional staff of authority in his hand carried immense symbolical power, marking what seemed to be a new beginning, and an overturn of the colonial structures and institutions of the State. As the president elect noted at the beginning of his speech that day:

Hoy día empieza un nuevo año para los pueblos originarios del mundo, una nueva vida en que busquemos igualdad y justicia, una nueva era, un nuevo milenio para todos los pueblos del mundo, desde acá Tiahuanacu, desde acá La Paz, Bolivia.<sup>19</sup> (Morales Ayma 2006)

The ‘turn,’ the new beginning evoked by Evo Morales, and commented on by Walsh, is based upon the understanding that since the conquest of the region by the Spanish, the power to govern had relied upon a small creole-mestizo oligarchy. Independence did not bring liberation or more autonomy from the structures and mechanisms of oppression established under colonial rule for the Indigenous and popular sectors of Bolivian society. As Anders Burman’s (2011) in his ground breaking book *‘Descolonización Aymara: Ritualidad y Política’* argues, the colonial condition for the Aymara people, or of any other indigenous people, did not go away with independence, rather colonialism continued to be an ongoing experience in the Andes.

[El] colonialismo no se ha percibido como un sistema obsoleto necesariamente asociado con la administración colonial española; sino como una situación de dominación contemporánea y del pasado relacionada con el “proyecto de la modernidad” donde los indígenas son los explotados y los “otros” los explotadores.<sup>20</sup> (Burman 2011, 34-35)

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<sup>18</sup> “a country with an indigenous majority [...] where the power of the State had always been in the hands of the q’ara (the white-mestizos)” (My translation)

<sup>19</sup> Today is the beginning of a new year for the indigenous peoples (native peoples) of the world, a new life in which we seek equality and justice, a new era, a new millennium for all the peoples of the world, from here Tiwanaku, from here La Paz, Bolivia. (My translation)

<sup>20</sup> [C]olonialism is not perceived as an out-dated system necessarily associated with the Spanish colonial administration; but as a situation of contemporary and past domination, related to the “project

Despite the active participation of these sectors in the independence wars, the control over the newly created states and state apparatus remained in the hand of a small number of creole and *mestizo* families. Independence did not bring deep social transformation in the form of emancipation for the Indigenous populations. Rather, the new states became the mechanisms through which the local creole and *mestizo* elites consolidated their access and control of land and local resources. (Choque Canqui 2012, 30-38) Power thus remained in the hands of a creole and mestizo elite, as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 4 and 5. The independence in the Bolivian case meant an aggravation of the conditions under which Indigenous peoples lived. Creating a defacto segregated system with two classes of citizens. Through requirements of land ownership and literacy the governing elites thought to restrain the political access of vast sectors of the population. These requirements aimed to consolidate “la figura del ciudadano letrado, referida al individuo en posesión del arte de pensar.”<sup>21</sup> (Irurozqui Victoriano 1999, 706) In this sense, Irurozqui suggests the restriction did not just aim to constrain along economic lines, rather underlying the figure of the citizen, lies a civilizational and homogenising project that sought to create a political community of literate and ‘thinking’ citizens, following the political imaginaries of Enlightenment thought. Thus re-inscribing through the figure of the landholding and literate citizen racial and colonial hierarchies. (Castro-Gómez 2000a, Mignolo 2006)

This meant that only those who had access to knowledge were deemed capable to assume political responsibility. Of course ‘to think’ in this context meant to think within the categories of European philosophical and political thought. The imagined political community of citizens was predicated upon the notion of the assimilation of ‘the Indian’ into the ‘civilised nation.’ (Irurozqui Victoriano 1999, 707) The failure to do so, was seen as the confirmation of the creole and *mestizos* superiority. Whereas all the others (those who did not know/could not know) were already excluded from the beginning. (Mignolo 2006, Quijano 2000c, 2006b) From the beginning the idea of the citizen was built upon the doubt of whether the ‘Indian’ was capable of the ‘art of thought.’ (Irurozqui Victoriano 1999, 706) As the basis of this process of racialised

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of modernity” where the indigenous are the exploited and the “others” are the exploiters. (My translation)

<sup>21</sup> “the figure of the literate citizen, referring to the individual in possession of the art of thought.” (My translation)

othering lies an inherent doubt that was installed on the colonised bodies and societies from the moment of conquest. This doubt, as Maldonado-Torres (2007, 245) has argued stands at the origin not just of the colonial order but of Western thought more generally:

The barbarian was a racialized self, and what characterized this racialization was a radical questioning or permanent suspicion regarding the humanity of the self in question. [...] Skepticism becomes the means to reach certainty and provide a solid foundation to the self. The role of skepticism is central for European modernity.

The scepticism of the very humanity of the colonised thus inscribes the legitimization of conquest and colonial violence not in some theological distinction between believer and non-believer, but on the very 'nature' and skin of the colonised. The suspicion inscribed onto the colonised bodies meant that within this antagonistic world view the colonised always represented a potential threat as the 'antithesis' to the colonial thesis, the savage to the civilised, the premodern to the modern. The scepticism of the colonised's humanity was translated into a constant state of war and with it came the normalisation of a non-ethics of war towards the colonised people. In other words, violence towards colonial bodies became normalised and an integral part of the colonial experience. (Maldonado-Torres 2007, 2008)

In this sense, rather than questioning and subverting the racialization and dehumanization of colonial bodies, the concept of citizenship further normalises it within the distinctions of citizen and non-citizen, rational and non-rational, the distinction between human/non-human. The Indigenous, then, was defined as that what the creole, mestizo was not, sedimenting the dichotomies of savage/civilized, premodern/modern, nature/culture. Building on Quijano and Dussel's work, Bikrum Gill (2016, 106) argues that "the ratiocentric distinction legitimating the Spanish conquest of the Americas enables the emergence of the more generalized subject/object or society/nature distinction integral to modern epistemology." Thus erasing the possibility to recognise 'other' ways of thinking and being from the start:.

Moving beyond the functional notion of race as "legitimatory discourse" sanctioning a rightless category of labour, as one amongst many "irrational natures" derived from the foundational society/nature binary, my argument is that the racialized figure of the "primitive" or "savage" human, whose humanity is rendered suspect –

the act of “misanthropic skepticism” –on account of its inability to extricate itself from the sphere of nature and, hence, productively act upon and shape it, stands as the necessary category of “non-being” against which the rational, uniquely value-producing, human can emerge and realize itself. (Gill 2016, 117-118)

Once the doubt over the capacity of rational thought and therefore of agency was established, it allowed for the justification of expropriation and exploitation. In this sense, the denial of citizenship rights and establishing a *de facto* second class citizenship, is not a republican innovation. But as mentioned earlier it shows the continuation and intensification of the different processes of colonial expansion and delegitimisation of other ways of knowing and being.

The colonial regime, as is discussed in Chapter 4, still maintained, at least on paper, the legal distinction between the Republic of the Indians and the Republic of the Spaniards as two distinct entities within the same territory. This provided, although admittedly only in a limited way, a level of autonomy and a recognised form of Indigenous governance within the empire. Many protections disappeared under the new republic where the suspicion of the indigenous capacity to govern themselves was further questioned. In this sense, independence opened up the possibility for the local elites to further expand their influence and power and forced many communities into serfdom. The stereotypes of indigenous peoples as being reactive and passive at best, and pre-modern and therefore incapable of having their own political agency was reasserted and institutionalised (Larson 1998, Mallon 1995, Sanjinés C 2004, Thurner 1997).

The new Republican states relied strongly on the systematic and institutionalised exploitation, denigration and exclusion of the indigenous peoples living in the region. Moreover ideas of social darwinism and scientific racism further normalized and justified processes of othering and oppression of Indigenous communities. In this sense, Burman (2011) and Rivera Cusicanqui (2010a) argue that to speak of a ‘post-colonial state’ in the Bolivian context is problematic, in particular if we are speaking of the experiences of Indigenous communities for whom colonialism did not end with independence. By highlighting the continuation of colonial institutions up to this day within Bolivia, Burman and Rivera Cusicanqui question the idea that colonialism ended with the independence from the Spanish empire. As Burman suggests, by establishing the periodisation along the idea of break between colonial and

republican regimes one risks to depict colonial oppression as something from the past. In this sense, I depart from the conceptualisation proposed by authors such as Quijano (1992, 2000a, b), Mignolo (2001b, 2002) and other authors associated with the decolonial turn, and their conceptual distinction between colonialism and coloniality. (Castro-Gómez 2000b, 2005, Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel 2007, Lander 2005, Walsh 2006, 2007, Wynter 2003) In particular when, as it is the case with Grosfoguel below, they imply a temporal separation:

Yo uso la palabra «colonialismo» para referirme a «situaciones coloniales» impuestas por la presencia de una administración colonial como el periodo del colonialismo clásico, y siguiendo a Quijano, uso «colonialidad» para definir «situaciones coloniales» en el periodo actual, en las que las administraciones coloniales han sido erradicadas casi por completo del sistema mundo capitalista.<sup>22</sup> (Grosfoguel 2006, 29)

By situating the break of ‘colonialism’ during the independence process at the beginning of the nineteenth century, as Grosfoguel does here, one reproduces the myth that the liberation from the Spanish crown of Latin American meant a change in the way the land was governed, or power was distributed. This prioritisation of the independence movements perpetuated the idea that independence brought a ‘before and after’ period and therefore situated modernity as temporally detached from colonialism. Thus, by reaffirming the moment of independence as a central turning point, one normalizes the foundational notion of modernity as being temporally separate from colonialism.

Desde su [de los Aymaras] punto de vista, las élites mestizas y criollas siguen siendo la encarnación de los poderes coloniales en Bolivia. [...] Los explotadores, en sus ojos, son los *q’aras*, que son vistos como *yaqha* (“otro” o “ajeno”) y, desde ese punto de vista, no hay nada “interno” en las relaciones asimétricas de poder entre los aymaras y los *q’aras*. La gran narrativa de la Patria en Bolivia describe la “época colonial” como algo del pasado; pero la memoria colectiva aymara de

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<sup>22</sup> I use the word ‘colonialism’ in order to refer to a ‘colonial situations’ imposed through the presence of a colonial administration, as they existed during the classic colonial period. Like Quijano, I use ‘coloniality’ to define ‘colonial situations’ in the present, where colonial administrations have been almost completely eradicated from the capitalist world system. (My translation)



subordinación y las rebeliones anticoloniales, así como la experiencia actual de continuo marginamiento sociopolítico y racismo institucionalizado, hacen del Colonialismo una realidad vigente.<sup>23</sup>

(Burman 2011, 35)

Therefore, while independence might in many ways have been a crucial turning point, this was not the case for everyone, as Burman (2011, 25-44) demonstrates. By overemphasising its importance, one risks reaffirming the role of certain groups and political imaginaries over others. In the case of Bolivia, the perpetuation of this particular periodisation was a key element in the consolidation of power by the local creole and mestizo elites, and served to silence and delegitimise other processes of liberation and emancipation that were manifesting during the colonial and republican era. By emphasising the continuous nature of colonialism, Burman (2011), opens up the space for a particular Aymara political and social imaginary to emerge. Thus allowing him to enrol a different timeline and different processes that do not have as their organising principle colonial modernity, and rather follow the periodisation and temporal horizon set by the Aymara *yatiris*, and political activists. In this sense, this thesis projects colonialism over coloniality, in order to highlight the colonial continuity on a material, epistemological and ontological plane.

This little excursion aids one in better understanding the significance of the ceremony on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2006 when Evo Morales evoked a new era and a new beginning for the indigenous peoples of Bolivia. In this sense the new era that was being called upon was meant to overcome a system that was designed to systematically exploit and exclude them from power and denied them the possibility to govern themselves. The electoral victory of the MAS, as well as the capacity demonstrated by the indigenous and popular movements to influence and change the course of Bolivian history in the previous decades, must be read as an assertion of their political agency. This idea I argue was reinforced by Evo Morales at the end of his speech in Tiwanaku when he said:

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<sup>23</sup> From their [Aymara] point of view, the mestizo and Creole elites remain the embodiment of the colonial powers in Bolivia. [...] The exploiters, in their eyes, are the *q'aras*, who are seen as *yaqha* ("other" or "alien") and from their perspective there was nothing 'internal' in the asymmetrical power relations between the aymara people and the *q'aras*. The grand narrative of the Fatherland in Bolivia describes the "colonial epoch" as something from the past; but the collective memory of the Aymara people is one of subordination and anti-colonial rebellions as well as current experiences of ongoing sociopolitical marginalization and institutionalized racism, making for them Colonialism as an ongoing reality. (My translation)

Desde acá impulsaremos que los pobres también tenemos derecho a gobernarnos, y en Bolivia los pueblos indígenas también tenemos derecho a ser presidentes.

Por eso, hermanas y hermanos, gracias al voto de ustedes, primeros en la historia boliviana, aymaras, quechuas, mojeños, somos presidentes, no solamente Evo es el presidente, hermanas y hermanos.<sup>24</sup> (Morales Ayma 2006)

By asserting that ‘we the poor also have the right to govern ourselves’ and that ‘indigenous people also have the right to be president’ Evo is directly evoking the long struggle led by the indigenous peoples and organisations. In doing so, he is conjuring images of anti-colonial resistance that aimed to dismantle the colonial nature of the state. As Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz (2016) in their in depth account of the *Indianismo* and *Katarismo* movements<sup>25</sup> during the twentieth century show, the understanding of Indigenous movements were key in questioning the discourses and practices that naturalised racism and doubted the capacity of indigenous peoples’ political subjectivity. As they show through the examples of the *Indianista* and *Katarista* trajectories, “formaron discursos, símbolos, acciones y organizaciones que horadaron el escabroso terreno del racismo de este país. Ello aportó a la concienciación, no solo de los indios, sino también de los q’aras.”<sup>26</sup> (Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz 2016, 25) Disrupting and challenging those who “asumían con naturalidad que los indios no debían tener pensamiento

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<sup>24</sup> From here on we will impel that we the poor also have the right to govern ourselves, and that in Bolivia indigenous peoples also have the right to be presidents.

That is why, sisters and brothers, thanks to your vote, we are the first in the history of Bolivia, aymaras, quechuas, mojeños, we are presidents, it is not just Evo the president, sisters and brothers. (My translation)

<sup>25</sup> Both ideological currents denounce the situation of oppression of the indigenous peoples and the colonial situation of Bolivia (expressed through its racialized hierarchies). Faced with this reality, both positions advocate a fight to achieve the definitive liberation of the indigenous peoples and of the entire country.

However, while the *Indianismo* was convinced that the Indian liberation would be the work of the Indian himself, they saw no reasons to seek alliances with the left or other political forces; *Katarismo* argued instead, that it would be beneficial for the cause to coordinate with the Marxist left because they agreed on fundamental ideals and objectives. Another difference was that while the *Indianismo* emphasized the importance of memory and national and ethnic consciousness; the *Katarismo*, aim was to underline the situation of economic oppression of the peasant. In this way the old debate between class and nation, which also involves the question of leadership, ie. the proletariat is the undeniable vanguard of liberation struggles or do indigenous people also have the right to set the course of their own liberation?

<sup>26</sup> “formed discourse, symbols, actions and organizations that bore through the rugged terrain of racism of this country. That contributed to the conscientization, not just of the Indian, but also of the q’aras.” (My translation)

político.”<sup>27</sup> (Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz 2016, 26) And thus revealing the colonial foundations at the heart of the Bolivian State.

As a consequence I suggest that the entire ceremony in Tiwanaku, in particular considering the fact that it came from a request by the different indigenous organisations, represents a symbolic affirmation of political subjectivity and agency so long denied by colonialism since the conquest of the region by the Spanish. The symbolic power of the ceremony and rituals, was one of subversion and an overturn of colonial rule. The ceremony in this sense also aimed to usher in the *pachakuti*; the long awaited and invoked ‘turn of time’ for the Indigenous peoples. Ushering in a cycle of renewal, where from now on, those who had been exploited and excluded under colonialism, would now govern, not just for themselves but for the entire country.

The *wayñus* that were played on that day with *pinkillus*, did not just celebrate the new agricultural cycle of life that takes place between All Saints and Carnival when the seeds give way to new crops, continuing the eternal cycle of life. The *wayñus* on that day were also softening and cultivating the hearts of the people present, preparing them for a new cycle. The *wayñus* were in a way calling the end of a long and difficult cycle of protests and struggles against several neoliberal governments. A cycle that ended with the complete electoral defeat of the parties representing the established colonial elites that had governed the country up to that day. But at the same time, as the quote opening this chapter explained, the *pinkillus* with their beautiful and dazzling sound which comes from the depths of the musicians’ beings, was preparing the hearts for and blowing life into the new cycle that was in the making.

## 2.2. Autochthonous music and colonialism

In October 2013, I attended a ceremony of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* on the *Plaza 14 de Septiembre*, the main square of Cochabamba. As usual for a Friday, the square was full of sounds, people walking, talking and laughing as they gathered around the different street artists who had come out on this warm spring evening. A group of capoeira dancers were presenting their skills to the rhythm set by the *birimbaos* by

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<sup>27</sup> “naturally assumed that the Indians should not have political thought” (My translation)

the big fountain in front of the Cathedral. Nearby, a couple of women in brightly coloured *polleras*,<sup>28</sup> white blouses and *awayu*<sup>29</sup> tied around their backs were sitting on benches, finishing braiding each other's hair. On the side, a group of men standing around three *bombos*,<sup>30</sup> with their red *ponchos* and the *siku*<sup>31</sup> in their hands were in deep discussion. Another group was standing just by the fountain hastily folding a printed manifesto into little booklets. It was the 11<sup>th</sup> of October and the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*, the umbrella organisation of urban autochthonous musicians in Cochabamba, had organised an event "*En Memoria de nuestros Pueblos: Por la Resistencia Cultural Revalorizando los Saberes Ancestrales*."<sup>32</sup> (Ayllu Apu-Tunari 2013) This event was part of a larger effort by the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* to raise the issue of ongoing racial discrimination and denigration of the indigenous peoples, cultural and religious practices.

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<sup>28</sup> Polleras is a pleated skirt, worn throughout the Andes by indigenous and non-indigenous women. In many places it has replaced woven dresses that were used before colonization.

<sup>29</sup> An awayu is a rectangular or square piece of woven cloth, mostly used to carry things on the back.

<sup>30</sup> Bombos are drums made mostly out of plywood and goatskin.

<sup>31</sup> Siku is the Aymara word for the double row panpipe.

<sup>32</sup> "In memory of our peoples (pueblos): For Cultural Resistance Revalorizing Ancestral knowledges" (My translation)



Figure 3: Musicians and dancers of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* on the Plaza 14 de Septiembre of Cochabamba performing a *Sikuri de Italaque* in front of the Cathedral on October 11 2013. Photo taken by the author.



Figure 4: This image shows the women dancing to the sound of the *siku* and the drums on the Plaza 14 de Septiembre of Cochabamba on October 11 2013. Photo taken by the author.

Even though this is a rather recent addition to the calendar of activities of the urban autochthonous groups, more than 50 musicians and dancers took part that day (see Figure 3 and 4) in the call of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*, in order to commemorate 521 years of anticolonial resistance, as well as to celebrate the peoples, cultures and civilisations who were already living in this part of the world. To hear the *sikur* in the main square on that day, fits well with the broader shift towards an increased valorisation of indigenous peoples, cultures and politics within Bolivian society over the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of organisations and movements in the Andean highlands during the 1970s and 80s, as well as the successful challenges by lowland indigenous movements during the 1990s are good examples of this shift. In this sense, indigenous movements such as the *Indigenista* and *Kataristas*, alongside organisations such as the CSUTCB, CIDOB, CONAMAQ were crucial in establishing Indigenous movements and politics as the dominant force within the Bolivian political landscape over the past half century. As discussed in the first chapter, the indigenous movement's strong opposition to the neoliberal order in the early 2000s set the foundations of Evo Morales electoral victory in 2005.

In this sense, the performance of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* is part of a broader effort promoting and revalorising indigenous peoples' cultural and religious practices within the broader Bolivian society. Where, despite the aforementioned advances, large sectors continue to face denigration and exclusion on a daily basis. In particular, indigenous peoples continue to be excluded and denigrated because of who they are, how they dress and how they look. As Richard Mújica an anthropologist and urban autochthonous musician of La Paz explained:

Actualmente la música autóctona [...] –con todo el bagaje cultural que involucra lo indígena– sigue en pugna muy fuerte; pese a este proceso que estamos viviendo ahora, sigue en cuestionamiento, porque si bien se habla de más colores y tejidos, se escuchan más sonoridades diferentes. La lectura que yo tengo, es que hay una visión muy exótica, de este último proceso que tenemos, sobre la música autóctona. Y al ser exótico termina siendo instrumentalizado.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Currently autochthonous music [...]–with all the cultural baggage that encompasses the indigenous–remains in a vehement struggle. Despite this process that we are currently living in, [autochthonous music] remains questioned. Even though one speaks of more colours and textiles, one hears many different sonorities, the analysis that I have, is that there is a very exotic view of this last

Despite the successful challenges to colonialism described in the first half of this chapter, this testimony brings to our attention that the colonial practices and discourses continue to shape and influence peoples' behaviours and attitudes. And despite the so called 'process of change' that Bolivia has embarked upon, having a new constitution that calls for the end of racism and the decolonisation of society in its preamble, (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2009) colonial structures, practices and discourses continue to be at play, shaping the everyday within Bolivia. Instead of moving towards a more profound emancipatory project and deeper social transformation, Indigeneity, and the calls for decolonisation have been redefined within a broader project that aims to construct a new homogenous national culture. (Canessa 2012, 15) Difference as such is contained within this new national culture. In other words, difference is only celebrated as part of this new national culture. Indigeneity and Indigenous cultural practices are highlighted because of their exotic nature and only rendered significant within this discourse for their capacity to project and depict new national culture. As such, more often than not, Indigenous cultural practices such as music has to be adapted in order to be recognised by the dominant discourse. Endogenous motivations and meanings are pushed into the background. The call by the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* for revalorisation, and the reestablishment of the 'memory of our peoples' is not an abstract political claim. Rather it shows in my view, an active effort from the musicians to shape and influence the public's opinion and perception of the different indigenous peoples' cultures and religious practices. In this sense, it seeks to further challenge ongoing practices and mechanisms of racial, ethnic, cultural exclusion and discrimination of Indigenous peoples and their religious and cultural practices.<sup>34</sup>

Autochthonous music remains a fundamentally and structurally denigrated and undervalued artistic and cultural manifestation. This is particularly visible in the treatment which urban, and in particular rural, autochthonous musicians face when they are invited to play at different events and festivities, such as civic events, festivals, fairs or private events. A founding member of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and member and former leader of the *Ayllu Ñan* described it the following way:

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process that we have, over autochthonous music. And as it is exotic it ends up being instrumentalised. (My translation) Interview with RM 03.04.2014

<sup>34</sup> For a more detailed study of race and racism in Bolivia see for instance the work of Benavides del Carpio and Serrano Birhuett (2011).

Porque esto era prohibido antes ¿no? O sea, era oculto, era denigrado. Hasta hoy en día, desde las propias autoridades no nos dan la importancia, no se da la importancia a la música. O sea, como un elemento ornamental nomás se toma.<sup>35</sup>

He further affirms that the difference of appreciation is not just manifest in the way the musicians and the music itself is treated. It is seen in the time slots provided, the lack of consideration for the length of the songs, as well as lack of thought about how the music is being performed, often forcing the groups to cut their interpretations in order to fit into the classic three to four minute timings for each song, as well as restricting the circular movement inherent to the practice of the music:

O sea, [en] el proceso de cambio, cualquier cosa [o] actividad, [que se trate de] lo cultural? [dicen:] ‘música que haya’... ya ya ya... (dice riendo un poco) ¡Y cómo nos tratan! Digamos, es: ¡Toquen!, ¡ahora cállense!, ¡ahora toquen!, ¡ahora cállense! No hay ese respeto, digamos, esa profunda ritualidad que hay entre la música, la comunidad y el cosmos, ¿no? En las comunidades la música es sumamente importante, ¿no? No es folklore, ¿no? No se toca para que nos aplaudan. Tocamos para conectarnos con el cosmos, o sea, la música tiene ese rol mediador, ¿no?<sup>36</sup>

Indigenous rituals, religious beliefs and cultural expressions, as the testimony above show, are continuously denigrated and their practitioners discriminated. This was also brought forward in series of national and regional meetings that occurred between 2011 and 2014 that brought together rural and urban practitioners of autochthonous music and dance that provoked the creation of regional organisations such as the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* in Cochabamba and the *Organización de Grupos y*

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<sup>35</sup> Because this was forbidden in the past, that is, it was hidden, it was denigrated. Even today, the authorities themselves don't give us any importance, no importance is given to the music, it is only taken as an ornamental element. (My translation) Interview with WF 13.02.14.

Wilder Flores Jaldin and his family migrated to the city of Cochabamba when he was a child from the municipality of Alalay in the Mizque Province. As a former leader of the *Ayllu Ñan*, and one of the drivers of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* he was part of the first directive of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* between 2012 and 2013. He is a professional musician and instrument maker and a fulltime member of the *Grupo Arawi* with whom he performs nationally and internationally.

<sup>36</sup> That is, the process of change, any, activity [really], [and it comes to] the cultural? ‘let there be music’... ya ya ya... (he says laughing a bit) And how they treat us: ‘play, now be quiet, now play, now be quiet. There is no respect, no ritual depth that exists between the music, the community and the cosmos, right? In the communities music is extremely important, right? It is not folklore right? One does not play so that we get applauded. We play in order to connect with the cosmos, that is music has that mediating function, right? (My translation) Interview with WF 13.02.14.



*Comunidades Intérpretes de música autóctona del Kollasuyu* (Organisation of groups and communities interpreters of autochthonous music of the Kollasuyu) in department of La Paz. These meetings marked an active effort by different groups and musicians to bring together musicians and dancers who practice autochthonous music, both in rural and urban areas in light of the current political and social transformations. From the very beginning of the discussions in 2011 the different organisers of the events put much effort and attention discussing these problems as well as the principles and values at the heart of the practice of music in the Andean region as well as the possible strategies that should be put in place by the musicians. The meetings were mostly organised in Cochabamba and La Paz between urban and rural autochthonous musicians, where they discussed a number of issues concerning the state of autochthonous music and dance and the issues that are arising within rural and urban contexts. In particular the question of denigration and instrumentalization as well as cooptation of autochthonous music within Bolivian society has been a recurrent issue addressed during the meetings, and in many ways a driver for the consolidation of these organisations. This was not different during the constitutive meeting for the departmental organisation of rural and urban autochthonous music and dances of La Paz in early 2014 that I was able to attend in La Paz. As the representative for the urban autochthonous music groups *Centro Willka Mayu* expressed:

Hablando sobre este aspecto que es muy importante, de organizarnos, descubrirnos, unirnos, para poder justamente tener las herramientas necesarias y así poder participar en el trazado de políticas culturales en nuestro Estado. Como dice el compañero R., la gente que está, en este momento, encargada de administrar la parte cultural no tiene conocimientos, están divorciados completamente de la parte cultural, de la cultura en sí misma de los pueblos originarios indígenas campesinos. Entonces, de esa manera comenten errores que atentan contra la identidad.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Talking about the important aspect of organising ourselves, discovering ourselves, uniting ourselves precisely in order to acquire the necessary tools and so as to be able to participate in the drafting of cultural policies in our State. As our comrade R. says, the people who are charged with administrating the cultural aspects, do not have the knowledge, they are completely divorced of the cultural aspects, of the very culture of the native, indigenous, peasant peoples. Because of that, they make mistakes that infringe [our] identity. (My translation) Intervention of VCM at the 'Reunion de Conformación

This testimony is just one of many that attest the levels to which discrimination and denigration of indigenous people and their religious and cultural practices continues to be deeply engrained within society even after the election of Evo Morales. It shows how the denigration of the musical practices is not just a question of taste or aesthetic preference, rather it is embedded within colonial narratives of exclusion and oppression that directly affect peoples' sense of who they are. This testimony highlights in particular the disinformation and dissociation that exists among the bureaucratic establishment when it comes to autochthonous music in particular and indigenous peoples in general despite the current governments' claims to have made clear steps to address the issues of racism by pushing for a decolonisation from inside the governmental institutions. For Richard Mújica who at the time worked for the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in La Paz is clear that autochthonous music is often instrumentalised and systematically looked down upon by those promoting decolonisation by the states bureaucracy:

Porque he visto en procesos del propio ministerio de que contratan a músicos autóctonos, ¿no?, pero al momento de mediar la parte económica, se vuelven a formar estos filtros, ¿no? Prefieres pagar al K'ala Marka para que toque en el mejor horario, para que toque súper bien y le pagas lo que te pide. Y cuando tiene que venir un grupo de música autóctona difiere, si es grupo de música autóctona con recorrido, que dicen que han grabado disco ¿no? o son músicos del campo. Ya, allí ya hay una diferencia en cuestiones económicas también. Porque no le van a pagar lo mismo a un grupo de música rural que nunca ha grabado, que toca súper bien, [que] a un grupo de música autóctono urbano, paceño, que haya grabado y que puede tocar muy mal.<sup>38</sup>

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de la Organización de Grupos y Comunidades Intérpretes de música autóctona del Kollasuyu,' 01.04.2014.

Víctor Colodro Morales is a musician of the city of La Paz. He played music for groups such as *Bolivia Manta*, *Kala Marka* with whom he had several performances all around Europe before returning to La Paz where he founded the *Centro Willka Mayu* in 2000. With whom he has made several records of Andean autochthonous music.

<sup>38</sup> Because I have seen it in the processes of the very Ministry [of Culture and Tourism], they do hire autochthonous musicians right? But when it comes to mediate the economic part, those same filters are formed again right? You prefer to pay K'ala Marka so that they can play at the best time, so that they can play very well and you pay them what they ask. And when an autochthonous group has to come it changes, if it is an autochthonous music group with trajectory that says it has recorded a disc, right? Or if they come from the rural area. Already there exists a difference regarding economic

The valorisation of autochthonous music remains a hard-fought achievement and does not simply permeate from the discourses of the president and his ministers. There continues to be a double standard, that evaluates certain artistic and musical performances as 'higher', not because of any 'objective' or economic reason other than because they are Indigenous and come from rural areas. Musical excellence continues to be defined and structured according to dominant and 'modern' frameworks where songs are supposed to have a particular length (three to four minutes) and the musicians are expected to be able to perform from a stage set with microphones. Musical performances that do not comply with these requirements do not have access to the same exposure. Moreover, autochthonous musicians are expected to be able to adapt to these structures and protocols. Very little attention is played to the internal logics and structures that make Andean autochthonous music what it is. There is a systematic and structural ignorance on the part of many organisers of the specificities and particular needs for an optimal musical performance. The undervaluation does not remain on the level of setting up or the treatment of the music. As the quote above already argued, it also is reflected in the economic remuneration the groups receive in comparison to other musicians for similar performances. This was made evident by a conversation I had with a member of the urban autochthonous music group *Comunidad Jack'a Marka* of La Paz:

En esas fiestas, en esas actividades culturales, casi no nos valoran la gente. Entonces, es por eso que queremos demostrar nosotros sí... la música autóctona es muy importante. Entonces, es por eso que yo personalmente dije: esto hay que valorizar; dije: esta música hay que valorizar porque es hermoso, porque hay gente que dice 'que lindo toca'. Entonces, lo estas llegando al alma, ¿no? Entonces, es por eso que a nivel gubernamental estamos haciendo conocer, para que nos reconozcan igual que los músicos criollos, músicos extranjeros, ¿no? Inclusive en sentido comercial que nos paguen igual, pues. A veces, en una fiestita, digamos matrimonio, nos quieren pagar con cervecita [...] eso no... tan lindo que es la música de nosotros, ¿no? Queremos ser

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questions as well. Because they are not going to pay the same to a group of rural musicians that never recorded and plays very good, than to an urban autochthonous group of La Paz, that has made a recording and plays very badly. (My translation) Interview with RM 03.04.2014

algo en la sociedad, algo alegre, algo pasional, ¿no? ¡Qué hermoso es!

Eso nos ha motivado, ¿no?<sup>39</sup>

The situation as the one described above shows how racism, discrimination and denigration of the different indigenous peoples, their culture, religion and ways of living and being continues to inform the decisions and behaviour of society and of the State. In particular, the participants repeatedly observed what the quote above identifies as disrespectful behaviour towards the music and the musicians. The testimony continues explaining:

Porque esto [música autóctona] no es una... no es un espectáculo. Esto es una memoria, la música de nuestros pueblos expresa una forma de vida, una forma de pensamiento y no es un espectáculo para divertir a la gente, o para distraer. Simplemente es un lenguaje en cual hemos guardado toda la memoria de nuestros ancestros. Entonces, con todo el derecho, con toda la autoridad que nos pertenece por la historia, por nuestra herencia, tenemos que también participar a ese nivel de políticas para poder establecer justamente el [...] respeto, un equilibrio y un reconocimiento de nuestra cultura para que también nuestros hijos puedan tener acceso a nuestra cultura.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> During those feasts, during those cultural activities, the people give us almost no value. That is why we want to show that... autochthonous music is important. That is why I personally said that we have to valorise, I said we have to valorise this music, because it is beautiful, because there are people who say 'how beautiful do you play,' in that sense, you are touching the soul right? That is why we are working to be recognized on a governmental level, we are making it known, so that we are recognized in the same way as creole musicians and foreign musicians, right? Even in a commercial sense, they should pay us the same. Sometimes in a small party, let's say a wedding, they want to pay us with beer [...] not like that... so our music is so beautiful right? We want to be someone/something in society, something cheerful, something passionate right? It is beautiful, that has motivated us right? (My translation) Interview with AR 21.10.2014.

Arsenio Rojas, approximately 60 years old is the long time leader of the *Comunidad Jach'a Marka*. An urban autochthonous music group of the Zona Sur of La Paz. He was born in Warisata of the Omasuyu Province of the Department of La Paz and moved to the city of La Paz when he was 12 years old. From a very young age he started playing *sikus* and continued to do so when he moved to the La Paz where he joined different *Siku* groups before he joined the *Comunidad Jach'a Marka*. He was one of the driving forces working towards the constitution of a departmental organisation of autochthonous music and dance.

<sup>40</sup> Because this [autochthonous music] is not... it is not a spectacle. This is a memory. The music of our peoples expresses a way of life, a way of thinking and it is not a spectacle to amuse the people, or to distract [them]. Simply [put] it is a language within which we have saved the entire memory of our ancestors. That is why with all the right, with all the authority that belongs to us because of history, because of our heritage we have to also participate on that [departmental and national] level of politics in order to establish precisely the respect, an equilibrium and a recognition of our culture so that our children also may have access to our culture. (My translation) Testimony by VCM at the 'Reunion Conformación de Organización Departamental de Música y Danza Autóctona de La Paz.'

Autochthonous music as this testimony argues cannot be reduced to a spectacle or an aesthetic or artistic expression, rather he suggests that there are more dimensions that are part of each performance that have to be taken into account. The music is inherently connected to the history and the ancestors. As another participant at the same event asserted: “Nosotros que hacemos música autóctona, sabemos que viene con los ciclos agrícolas, con la época de lluvia, con la época fría, ¿no es cierto? La música está vinculada con toda la ritualidad.”<sup>41</sup> In a way, these testimonies assert that ‘one does not just play music.’<sup>42</sup> As a consequence they claim that it has to be treated differently to other musical practices because, music, autochthonous music is a constitutive part of the Andean way of living, being and knowing. By imposing alien structures and treating it like any other ‘pop song’ that is three to four minutes one not only risks to distort, and disrespect the spiritual and ritual elements of the performance but the worlds and realities that are constantly being constituted. The meetings and congresses organised by urban autochthonous musicians in Cochabamba and La Paz highlighted this aspect clearly, it is not enough to just save the melodies, the instruments, the costumes, and dances, one has to understand the music within its social, spiritual, and cosmic contexts. As the testimony discussed above clearly states, it is out of this recognition that the necessity to act on the political level emerges. In many ways, the meetings highlighted the importance that the ritual and religious elements dictate the political strategy and not the other way around. As I have tried to show through the different quotes of autochthonous musicians it is the music that dictates the values as well as the paths the groups should aim for. Out of this emerges a discourse that recognises that it is not enough to just play correctly, and mimic the dances and costumes of the different communities. Rather what many participants suggested that through these organisations they wanted find spaces where different ways of living, knowing were made possible. In other words, by participating and building these organisations they saw a way to

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<sup>41</sup> “We who play autochthonous music, we know which [colouring] comes with the agricultural cycles, with the rain season, with the cold season, isn’t it right? The Music is connected with all the rituality.” (My translation) Testimony by RM at the ‘Reunion Conformación de Organización Departamental de Música y Danza Autóctona de La Paz.’

<sup>42</sup> This formulation paraphrases the important book titled ‘La Tierra no da así nomás’ (Earth does not just give like that) of Hans van den Berg (1990) and the exhaustive work of Eveline Sigle and David Mendoza Salazar (2012b, a) entitled ‘No se baila así nomás...’ (One does not just dance...). These books are important contributions, highlighting the interconnected nature of different agricultural practices with the festive practices, the music, dances and the religious practices. Showing a holistic and internally coherent organisational structure.

respect the music, to valorise the cultures, their knowledges and to respect and follow the underlying values and principles of those cultures. In this sense, decolonisation is both about the transformation of society as well as of the individual. What is needed to preserve these cultural practices is a change in the value system as well as a change in the way people relate to each other.

### 2.3. State decolonisation and its problems

In this context, the government appears to be pushing through a number of events and reforms that are aimed to preserve and promote the different Indigenous cultural and religious practices.<sup>43</sup> In fact, since Evo Morales and the MAS won the election in 2005, the government made an effort to introduce a number of different symbols, rituals and historical figures in order to exemplify its Andean and Amazonian roots (Nicolas and Quisbert 2014, Tórrez and Arce 2014). A 'new' state was projected that would recognise the different indigenous peoples and cultures from the preamble of the constitution (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2009) as the original holders of the land, constitutive of the Bolivian nation. Therefore seemingly revoking centuries of legislation and practices of discrimination and segregation of Indigenous peoples and promoting instead a more inclusive notion of what it means to be Bolivian, one that sets the indigenous peoples' and the popular urban sectors their struggles and resistance at the heart of the new project.<sup>44</sup> Doing so, the government established a strong narrative of an indigenous revival, evoking images of indigenous as well as popular resistance and rebellions reinventing the figures of Zarate Willka, Túpac Katari, Bartolina Sisa among many others as the founding fathers and mothers of the new state. In this new project notions such as the *Buen Vivir* (living well), or *Allin Kawsay* (in Quechua), *Suma Qamaña* (in Aymara)<sup>45</sup> have become common within discourses and state policies in order to legitimise them (Choquehuanca 2010, Huanacuni Mamani 2010, Cárdenas Aguilar 2010). But also more visible symbols such as the *Whiphala* have become official State symbols. Furthermore, religious

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<sup>43</sup> Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014, La Paz.

<sup>44</sup> This has already been discussed in chapter 1. See for instance Postero (2007, 2010b).

<sup>45</sup> These concept has received over the years an increased attention by the academic literature see for instance the works of Dávalos (2008), Farah and Vasapollo (2011), Félix (2012) León (2010) Rengifo Vásquez (2002) and Yampara Huarachi (2011).

festivities such as the *Inti Watana*, or also referred to *Willka Kuti* (Winter solstice) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June, have been incorporated into the states ceremonial calendar. The government has also been keen to promote different social and cultural platforms from where a more diverse and inclusive notion of Bolivia can be projected. By promoting cultural events and festivals such as patron saint festivals, or events in the name of *Pachamama*, it has also been keen to promote and subsidise the cultural production, through the establishment of prizes such as the *Eduardo Abaroa* prize, that is given every year in a wide range of different categories in order to 'promote the artistic and cultural production of Bolivian society'. (Ministerio de Culturas y Turismo Bolivia 2016)

This narrative was further maintained during an interview by the Viceminister for Decolonisation and Depatriarchalisation, Aymara intellectual and Katarista trade union leader Félix Cárdenas.<sup>46</sup> He emphasised repeatedly the idea that the establishment of the Plurinational State of Bolivia was a response to the colonial continuity of the Bolivian State up until 2008. He explained to me that the so-called 'process of change' was intrinsically connected with a long struggle by indigenous and social movements to redefine and reinvent what it means to be a Bolivian citizen. For him, Bolivian society has to transform, has to decolonise from within. It can no longer see itself as a 'monolithic nation' with one language, one culture, one religion. Rather it has to learn to see itself as being composed by many different cultures, languages and nations.

Entonces, el tema de la identidad es importante, es por eso que en la Asamblea Constituyente aprendemos, entendemos que no somos una sola nación, como nos han enseñado en la escuela, en el colegio. Desde la fundación de Bolivia en las escuelas, en los colegios nos han hecho creer que somos una sola nación, un solo idioma, una sola religión. Por esa forma mono-lineal de ver el país, jamás pudimos construir una identidad nacional. No tenemos ahora una identidad nacional, está en construcción. Ahora entendemos que no somos una sola nación. Por la lucha de los movimientos sociales [aprendimos] que somos 36 idiomas, 36 culturas, 36 formas de ver el mundo. Y también 36 formas de darnos respuestas sobre este mundo.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014, La Paz.

<sup>47</sup> In this sense, the question of identity is important, that is why in the Constituent Assembly we learned and understood that we were not a single nation, as they have been teaching us in school and high school. Since the foundation of Bolivia, they made us believe in the schools, high schools, that

Cárdenas identifies the issue of a failed nation building process, at the heart of the failed political projects up until the present. This is a claim that will be picked up again in more detail in Chapter 5. For him it is clear that the State of Bolivia has been built since its conception upon the exploitation of large parts of its population, as well as the perpetuation of a particular colonial elite in power. As such, the establishment of a nation, or national identity was always a top down project, that disregarded the experiences and ways of living of most of its population. For him it was clear that the concept of citizenship was just one more way of discriminating and perpetuating the colonial order within the Republic. Decolonisation understood under these terms, he argued, is part of a wider attempt to redefine what it means to be Bolivian, to construct a 'new national' identity, one that is not built around homogeneity but rather diversity and plurality of different cultures. In this sense, Cárdenas sees the transformation of the foundations upon which the national identity and citizenship are based as a necessary precondition for decolonisation and any meaningful change in society to happen.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia and its institutions in his view, have become the main instruments through which a new political project can be constructed. From this he concluded that decolonisation did not remain only on the level of discourse but has become part of the State's fabric and everyday activity. It is in the Constitution. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter 1 the preamble states: overcoming colonialism and the colonial has become a task the State itself has to strive for (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2009). Decolonisation in the words of the Viceminister is reimagined from within the limitations of State. This conceptualisation transforms social and indigenous movements into recipients and benefactors of the governments reforms. Within this State run decolonisation, an abstract and unspecific representation of Indigeneity is set foundation of this new political and social project. This is further made evident when Cárdenas argued that:

O sea, se trata también de construcción de paradigmas. [...] Hoy el paradigma es el mismo pueblo, es el pueblo indígena. [...] Hoy, creemos que los paradigmas salen de la filosofía de nuestros pueblos

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we were a single nation, with a single language, a single religion. Because of that mono-lineal way of looking at the country, we were never able to build a national identity. At this moment we do not have a national identity, it is being constructed. Now we understand that we are not a single nation. It is because of the fight of the social movements that we [have learned] that there are 36 languages, 36 cultures, 36 different ways of seeing the world. And as well 36 ways to give answers to this world. (My translation) Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014, La Paz



y para nosotros se llama *Pachamama*, Madre Tierra. [...] Es un paradigma planetario, quién no está preocupado de la existencia hacia adelante de nuestro planeta? Entonces, el paradigma planetario es *Pachamama*. Y ¿quién es el sujeto histórico? Para nosotros, el indio. El indio en tanto Presidente, el indio en tanto masas, el indio en tanto proyecto político, el indio en tanto paradigma planetario.<sup>48</sup>

According to Cárdenas, this new planetary paradigm of the *Pachamama* then, is one that has its revolutionary subject in the Indigenous. The *Pachamama* thus becomes the ordering principle of our reality, and the metric according to which political, economic and social politics should be oriented. And yet Indigenous people at the centre of this new political order, remain in Cárdenas discourse, intentionally unspecific and homogenous. Indigeneity thus becomes an abstract and theoretical category detached of particular experiences. He further clarifies that this shift, or process of decolonisation, does not mean a 'romantic return to the past':

Estamos en un proceso de descolonización. Descolonización no quiere decir volver atrás, como mucha gente a veces puede decir que lo entienden. No se trata de un retorno romántico al pasado. Se trata de una recuperación científica de lo mejor de nuestro pasado, para combinarlo con el siglo veintiuno. Pero no con cualquier modernidad, sino una modernidad que nos permita hacer desarrollo sin dañar a la madre tierra. Con una modernidad que nos permita hacer industrias, en equilibrio con la madre tierra.<sup>49</sup>

Decolonisation and modernity are brought together through the idea of progress and development and the promise of a *Pachamama* as an ethical interpellation that would restrain any form excess. Cárdenas in these two quotes brings together the political

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<sup>48</sup> In this sense, it is also about building paradigms. [...] Now the paradigms are the people themselves, it is the indigenous people. [...] Today we believe that paradigms, emerge from the philosophy of our people, and for us it is called Pachamama, Mother Earth. [...] It is a planetary paradigm, which is not worried about the existence of our planet going forward? Then the planetary paradigm is Pacha Mama. And who is the historical subject? For us it is the Indian. The Indian as president, the Indian as masses, the Indian as a political project, the Indian as a planetary paradigm. (My translation) Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014.

<sup>49</sup> We are in a process of decolonization. Decolonization does not mean to go back as many people sometimes say they understand it. This is not a romantic return to the past. It is a scientific recovery of the best of our past, to combine with the twenty-first century. But not with any modernity, but a modernity that allows us to do development without harming Mother Earth. With a modernity that allows us to build industries, in harmony with Mother Earth. (My translation) Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014.

and economic project of the MAS, that the Vice-president Alvaro García Linera (2015) has defined as 'communitarian socialism' in his publication and speeches. The quote also shows the tensions that come along when one speaks of decolonisation, modernity, development and economic progress. Decolonisation then becomes the path towards a project of development and progress that is according to both Cárdenas and García Linera (2011, 2012) separate and different from capitalist modernity's ideas of development and progress. Different because they are, as Cárdenas explains, based within 'Indigenous philosophy' and the paradigm of the *Pachamama*. Even though these discourses represent at least on a discursive level a significant change with previous administrations, there have been a series of critical voices from an early stage that have expressed their concerns over the depoliticisation and the homogenisation of different Indigenous peoples into a broad and unspecific category. (Molina 2016, Mayorga 2016, Pachaguayaya 2013, Quispe Huanca 2014, Schavelzon 2015, Yampara Huarachi 2011) These critics have also voiced their concern over the use and emptying out of the different Andean and Amazonian symbols and concepts. (Macusaya Cruz 2014, Mújica Angulo 2017) As a result, they claim the call for decolonisation, the discourse on the *Pachamama* and *Allin Kawsay* are only strategically invoked whenever they are useful to promote the governments agenda. (Macusaya Cruz 2014, Mamani Ramírez 2012) As a result you have Evo Morales going to the United Nations and calling for the defence of Mother Earth and the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, while at the same time further deregulating the mining industry and actively delegitimising indigenous organisations within Bolivia. Another implication of a State run decolonisation process, is that it has turned Indigenous and Social movements into recipients and beneficiaries of the State.

As a consequence, if they want to achieve any sort of gain or policy they are forced to comply within the parameters established by the government. In this sense, it is no longer the state that is adapting itself to the different Indigenous uses and costumes rather by incorporating the task to decolonise within itself it forces the Indigenous people, and other social movements to adapt to the State. As Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz (2016, 23) poignantly remark:

La elección de Morales como Presidente de Bolivia, así como su asunción y sus dos gestiones ya cumplidas, han sido presentadas como la coronación de una lucha histórica de los movimientos

indígenas. Este rasgo histórico se ha tratado de expresar y comprender a partir de un sinfín de actos rituales, en los que los colores, tejidos, wiphalas, “sabios”, grupos de “música autóctona”, polleras y ponchos, entre otros, fueron los componentes principales. Se ha propiciado una gran cantidad de ceremonias dirigidas a turistas, como si esto fuese por lo que han luchado los “indígenas”, como si este fuera el contenido de su lucha.<sup>50</sup>

Rituals such as the one performed at Tiwanaku in 2006 have become goals in themselves detached from the experience that has brought it about. In other words, rituals, autochthonous music and the Indigenous as a political subject are being normalised, institutionalised and depoliticised. Their performance and executions have become part of the everyday public, exemplifying the claims of diversity and cultural richness as well as of exoticism by which Bolivian society has come to define itself. In this context, critical and important interventions of the Indigenous movements and their urban allies risk being rendered invisible, or at least reduced as the rituals are further detached from the political realities that brought them to forefront. The following section will further analyse how this leads to the co-optation and assimilation of Indigenous cultural and religious practices into a wider set of narratives where diversity and inclusion are framed and reduced to the level of culture and identity, with their political nature being made invisible to the spectator.

## 2.4. Folklorisation of Indigenous cultures

Autochthonous music, Indigenous rituals and symbols are reduced to identity markers, and only significant in their capacity to evoke a particular imagery of an ‘indigenous looking,’ ‘indigenous sounding’ government. Indigenous culture as a result is folklorised: employed as a decoration, an ornament that attests the ‘authenticity’ and provides the exoticism that legitimises claims of singularity of the ‘new’ national culture and its government. The evocation of *Pachamama*, the use of

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<sup>50</sup> The election of Morales as President of Bolivia, as well as his rise [to power], alongside two legislative periods, have been presented as the coronation of a historic fight of the indigenous movements. They have attempted to capture and understand this historic nature, through a great many ritual acts, in which the main components were the colors, fabrics, wiphalas, ‘wise men,’ ‘autochthonous music’ groups, polleras and ponchos among others. There has been a great amount of ceremonies directed at tourists, as if this was what the “indigenous” have fought for, as if this was the content they fought for. (My translation)

concepts such as *Allin Kawsay* or the use of the *pinkillu*, makes Evo Morales Ayma and his government distinguishable from previous governments in Bolivia and internationally from other governments in the world.

Following Goldstein (2004, 136) I understand folklorisation to be a process through which Indigenous cultural and religious practices are disassociated from their rural and peasant/indigenous origins and reimagined as elements of vibrant modern (urban) society that is seen to be very much connected with its 'ancestral' traditions. As Goldstein (2004, 136) poignantly observes, folklore in this case not only designates a process of detachment from a cultural expression of its peasant origins, but also implies a periodisation of culture:

Folklore at once refers to the expressive culture of the Latin American peasantry, its origins lost in the ancient past, and to the cultural traditions of the modern nation [...]. Implicit in this dual definition is a particular understanding of history that view the rural producer of folklore themselves as trapped in the past, while rescuing folkloric objects and performances as fully emblematic of the modern nation-state. The fact that many significant folkloric events (including Bolivia's Carnaval de Oruro) are performed in urban settings further reinforces this dualism, the fact of urban performance serving to underline the modernity of "traditional" culture.

Music, dance, clothing, rituals are isolated and redefined, repurposed to consolidate a modernising tale of the State. Helping to hide questions of structural discrimination and exclusion behind calls of decolonisation and rituals in favour of the *Pachamama*. The case of music and cultural appropriation by certain privileged elites, and urban dwellers is a good example. Autochthonous music today is often commodified as an ornament to be exhibited to create the mirage of authenticity and cultural diversity in institutional and societal contexts where the discrimination and institutionalised racism are still deeply engrained into the fabric of the State and society. By transforming music and rituals into pieces of performance and art, that can be displayed, these traditions are stripped of their content and meaning and get completely absorbed into colonial/modern frameworks of reference. In this sense, even though Goldstein's analysis is situated within the pre-Evo Morales era of neoliberal and multiculturalist policies, his conclusions remain relevant as to how the government and the MAS' use of indigenous symbols, rituals and indigenous

sonorities is further contributing to a folklorisation and exoticisation of Indigenous cultures. In this sense, his analysis further helps understand how by folklorising and exoticising Indigenous cultures, the government is also creating a temporal divide between themselves and the Indigenous political movements they claim to represent. Situating them into a remote past, a past only ever evoked in order to create a veneer of authenticity, and in order to claim an anti-modern positionality. As Goldstein (2004, 136) further writes:

In becoming urban, folklore sheds the anti-modern associations derived from its purportedly indigenous rural origins and attaches to itself the essence of modernity that the city represents. As a counterpoint to modernity, folklore tends to evade interrogation as a site for the production and legitimisation of state power. At the same time, it is folklore's hybridity, its careful blending of tradition and modernity, that enables it to stand as emblematic of the modern, progressive, urban nation that has not lost touch with its traditional, rural past.

Displaying Indigenous cultural and religious practices help the MAS to simultaneously take a critical anti-modern, anti-capitalist veneer while at the same time holding onto a notion of an 'alternative modernisation.' An "alternative modernization [that] still maintains a teleological view of reality that is preserved within the confines of Eurocentrism and that reactualises, in its expectation of a promising future, developmentalist imaginaries." (Sanjinés C 2013, 9) In this sense, the folklorisation of Indigenous culture serves to situate the newly established Plurinational State as part of a long historical process of anti-colonial resistance. The MAS, therefore can present itself as the bridge connecting both indigeneity and modernity, as the only political actors who can create "una modernidad que nos permita hacer industrias, en equilibrio con la madre tierra."<sup>51</sup> By claiming their Indigenous origins through carefully orchestrated rituals and ceremonies, allow the government to sustain their claim of being critical of capital modernity. While at the same time the temporal displacement and exoticisation of indigeneity allows the

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<sup>51</sup>"a modernity that allows us to build industries, in harmony with Mother Earth." (My translation) Interview with Félix Cárdenas 31.4.2014.

current political process to be presented within the telos of the modern capitalist world but not as constitutive element of it.

Portugal Mollinedo's and Macusaya's (2016, 23) critic of the MAS and its politics of decolonisation that I have raised in the previous section is significant in this regard. In particular, when they argue that performing rituals, or showcasing Indigenous cultural practices is not in itself an act of decolonisation, nor does it necessarily contribute to the liberation and emancipation of the Indigenous peoples.

Si bien símbolos como la wiphala o los nombres de líderes aymaras como Tupak Katari llenan los actos y los discursos referidos a los "indios", la forma en que estos elementos son enarbolados –en medio de actos "ancestrales"– nublan los procesos históricos de los que emergieron. Símbolos como la wiphala o el nombre de Tupak Katari como grito de guerra ya no están más ligados a la lucha histórica indígena.<sup>52</sup> (Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz 2016, 24)

The disassociation of figures like Túpaj Katari and symbols such as the *Wiphala* from the political, social and anticolonial struggles of the Indigenous peoples takes away the radical and revolutionary potential with which they were infused by the Indigenous movements. Túpak Katari then becomes one more hero within a pantheon of revolutionary martyrs who can be invoked at will. His struggle becomes depoliticised, detached, rendered almost ahistorical and relegated into an ancestral and mythical past, from where connection to current social struggles are necessarily filtered through the imaginary of those who are in power. As a result the Indigenous struggle, they argue, gets transformed into a question of identity that is detached from the political and anticolonial nature.

Se ha vuelto de sentido común asumir que lo indígena es una cuestión de rituales, de búsqueda de "saberes ancestrales" o de "contemplación de la naturaleza". En general, se supone que el indígena es la personificación de lo radicalmente opuesto al mundo occidental y a su cultura, que ha pervivido desde la colonización hasta el presente. Según tal forma de "entender" lo indígena en un "gobierno indígena",

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<sup>52</sup> Even though symbols like the wiphala or the names of Aymara leaders such as Tupak Katari, fill up the [public] functions and the discourses referring to the 'indians', the way in which these elements are raised—in the middle of 'ancestral' acts—clouds the historical processes from which they emerged. Symbols such as the wiphala or the name of Tupak Katarin as a cry of war are no longer linked to the historical indigenous fight. (My translation)

no es de extrañar que se hayan promovido una gran variedad de actos saturados de exotismo y hechos al gusto de los “occidentales”, ni que la alusión a la lucha histórica haya sido solo una frase hueca.<sup>53</sup>

(Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz 2016, 23)

Indigeneity, their cultures, their religions thus becomes a commodity that can be performed, sold, consumed. The political struggle is further detached from current realities. Moreover they argue that indigeneity, under the tutelage of the MAS is being homogenised and presented as a brand, a lifestyle with which a westernised ‘audience’ can relate and find a sense of purpose or even a sense of belonging. As a consequence of this, I argue that through these processes of relegating Indigeneity into a historical past, and of exoticisation; identity, culture, society becomes petrified, fixed to a particular moment (or idea of a moment) and a particular depiction and imagery associated with it. While at the same time modernity is implicitly reaffirmed as the vantage point from where these processes are evaluated and judged. Indigenous peoples authenticity, and continuity then, are measured by the extent to which they resemble the (modern) ideations of the past that we have in the present. Authenticity then becomes something that has to be constantly performed, and relies on the performer’s ability to show to the spectator how they have remained the same over time, and have maintained their ‘ancestral’ self (essence) against the backdrop of any change, and in particular of modernity’s influence. As such the capacity to be recognised as Indigenous by the spectator becomes a crucial precondition to claim any form of authenticity. As a consequence of this process of folklorisation, Indigeneity cannot be seemingly authentic and modern at the same time. Self-recognition and self-determination are once again relegated in favour of the gaze of the modern subject. Modernity is implicitly reaffirmed as an existential threat to Indigenous peoples, their culture and ways of living. Thus reaffirming what Robbie Shilliam (2015, 7) has defined as the ‘fatal impact’ thesis namely the idea that when faced with modernity Indigenous cultures are doomed to disappear or risk being

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<sup>53</sup> It has become common sense to assume that indigeneity is a question of rituals, of a search for ‘ancestral knowledges’ or of the ‘contemplation of nature’. In general, one assumes that the indigenous is the personification of the radical opposite of the occidental world and its culture, which he has survived since the colonisation to the present. According to this way of ‘understanding’ indigeneity within an ‘indigenous government’, it should not surprise us that they promoted a large number of acts saturated with exoticism and which were made to the taste of the ‘westerners,’ nor that the reference to the historical fight has only been an empty sentence. (My translation)

assimilated.<sup>54</sup> The following section discusses the assumptions that drive the ‘fatal impact’ thesis. Doing so it examines how these assumptions continue to shape contemporary conception of indigeneity. Moreover, I suggest that these assumptions are at the heart of how we have come to know and see the world within colonial modernity.

## 2.5. Thinking ‘other-wise’

As Shilliam’s (2015, 7) ‘fatal impact’ thesis explains: the ‘fatal impact’ thesis “rests on the assumption that Indigenous cultures could not withstand or compete with the sophistication of European civilization: they would have to die or transform into substitute versions of the conquering culture.” This helps us understand why transformation is framed as loss; a loss of identity, a loss of tradition, a loss of a sense of belonging. Change, modernity in this iteration, becomes an existential threat, that destroys Indigenous culture, religious practices, and the community. Modernity, thus presents itself as an all-encompassing, inevitable reality, that is constantly reaffirmed as the threat to which indigeneity (as a remnant of the past) has to react. Indigeneity thus becomes something that has to be saved from modernity and preserved in the archives and museums.

Through the process of folklorisation as discussed above, different cultural and religious practices are re-appropriated as part of a ‘modern’ and hybrid social project. Under the guise of folklore, modernity is reintroduced as the saviour who simultaneously modernises while maintaining the culture’s connection with tradition. This romanticised iteration of Indigeneity is thus forced to perform under the gaze of the modern subject. As such an authentic performance is judged by the capacity to convincingly look ‘Indigenous’ as well as to display a ‘deep connection’ with the ‘ancestral’ and ‘nature.’ Indigeneity becomes an element of a new hybrid, multicultural society, that can be consumed, and to which one can have access to by listening to the newest single of the different Bolivian folklore groups, such as the *K’ala Marka*, or can be found in the ‘World music’ section of your music store.

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<sup>54</sup> A similar point is raised by Karena Shaw (2008) in book *Indigeneity and Political Theory: Sovereignty and the limits of the political*, specially in chapter 3.



Indigeneity can be experienced (lived) by chewing coca and performing a *q'uwa* on the first Friday of the month or on the Lake Titicaca while waiting for dawn in order to perform the mystic rituals of the *Inti Watana* during the winter solstice.

Modernity here refers to a space of intelligibility and a strategy through which European colonialism could be implemented and legitimised (Moraña, Dussel, and Jáuregui 2008, 8). Modernity for the 'decolonial scholars' responds to a particular set of issues and problems that emerge out of conquest of the Américas during the fifteenth century. Dussel asserts that modernity was born with the arrival of Columbus in the Caribbean:

1492, según nuestra tesis central, es la fecha del “nacimiento” de la Modernidad [...]. La Modernidad se originó en las ciudades europeas medievales, libres, centros de enorme creatividad. Pero “nació” cuando Europa pudo confrontarse con “el Otro” y controlarlo, vencerlo, violentarlo; cuando pudo definirse como un “ego” descubridor, conquistador, colonizador de la alteridad constitutiva de la misma Modernidad. De todas maneras, ese Otro no fue “descubierto” como Otro, sino que fue “en-cubierto” como “lo Mismo” que Europa ya era desde siempre.<sup>55</sup> (Dussel 2008a, 8)

Dussel argues, modernity is constituted upon the violent negation of the Other's difference, by the projection of the 'self' upon the Other, concealing its alterity. Modernity for Dussel thus responds to Europe's ontological limitations revealed by the encounter of European adventurers, settlers and conquistadors, with Indigenous peoples during the violent conquest and colonisation of the Américas. As Dussel explains, the discovery of América did not appear in the European literature as “algo que resiste *distinta*, como *el Otro*, sino como la materia a donde se le proyecta 'lo Mismo'.”<sup>56</sup> (Dussel 2008a, 35 emphasis in the original) Modernity, in this sense, rests on the concealment of difference through the projection of sameness by the European conquistador. Through this process of 'saming' one “denies the objectified other the

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<sup>55</sup> According to our central thesis, 1492 is the date of the 'birth' of modernity [...] Modernity emanates from the European medieval cities, free, centers of great creativity. But it was 'born' when Europe was in a position to pose itself against 'the Other,' to control it, vanquish it, assault it; when Europe was able to constitute itself as an 'ego' capable of exploring, conquering, colonizing the very alterity constitutive of Modernity itself. This Other, in other words, was not 'discovered' as an Other, rather it was “concealed” as that which Europe always already was. (My translation)

<sup>56</sup> “something that resists as *difference*, as *the Other*, rather than as the matter upon which one can project 'Sameness.’” (My translation)

right to her difference and subjects her to the laws of the self.” (Blaser 2014b, 52). The ‘Other’ is translated into the coloniser’s terms, difference is in this case being made sense within the terms of the self, situating the coloniser’s ontological framework at the level of the real. In this sense, Vázquez (2017, 77) argues that: “Modernity, the Western model of civilization, could only affirm itself as the world’s historical reality, as the now of time and the here of space, the present of history and the centre of geography, through conquest and colonialism.”

In other words, through conquest and colonialism Europeans reimagined the Américas and its inhabitants in their own image; Europe reimagined the world with themselves at the centre of it. Following Dussel’s work Linda M. Alcoff (2007, 83) further determines that:

Colonialism is constitutive of modernity, of its teleological macro-narratives of human progress, and of the material base necessary to provide both the surplus and the self-representation required to imagine Europe as the vanguard of the human race.

Modernity and colonialism, or colonality thus cannot be understood as two distinct or successive moments, or processes, rather, as Mignolo (2001a, 2011) propounds, colonialism/coloniality is the underside/the dark side of modernity. Along similar lines Escobar (2007, 185) taking up the work of Dussel, Mignolo and Quijano, determines that “there is no modernity without coloniality.” Colonialism/coloniality and modernity are thus co-constitutive of each other; they are two sides of the same coin (Grosfoguel 2006, 28). By affirming this foundational relation Dussel (2008a, 36) further concludes that:

El *ego* moderno ha aparecido en su confrontación con el no-ego; los habitantes de las nuevas tierras descubiertas no aparecen como Otros, sino como lo Mismo a ser conquistado, colonizado, modernizado, civilizado, como “materia” del *ego* moderno. Y es así como los europeos (o los ingleses en particular) se transformaron [...] en “los misioneros de la civilización en todo el mundo”, en especial con “los pueblos bárbaros”.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The modern *ego* appeared in its confrontation with the non-ego; the inhabitants of the newly discovered lands do not appear as Others, rather as the Same to be conquered, colonised, modernised, civilised, as the ‘matter’ or the modern *ego*. And it is like this how the Europeans (or the English in particular) transformed themselves as “the missionaries of civilization in the entire world, in particular with the ‘barbaric peoples.’ (My translation)

This double negation—that is the negation of alterity and its concealment—allows the colonisers to depict the Indigenous, not just as someone to ‘be colonised,’ but as someone without a history,<sup>58</sup> without land, without agency, as essentially lacking. In other words, difference does not refer to a radical alterity rather it is characterised through the identification and affirmation of a lacking ‘same.’ As such the hierarchical distinction between the coloniser and the colonised, the modern/civilised and the non-modern/savage is affirmed an ontological and epistemological level.

Building on this analysis, Gill (2016) further suggests that this double negation is already predicated upon the outfall of conquest. In doing so, Gill shows how Dussel’s critique and depiction of the emergence of colonial modernity as a legitimating framework, risks denying Indigenous presence and agency, by failing to understand colonial modernity as a response to Indigenous socio-ecological practices and embodied knowledges. Colonial modernity as a legitimising framework, Gill (2016, 109) suggests, is “expressive of a profound fear and anxiety generated within European settler subjectivity by its dependence, for survival in the “new world,” upon the deep place-based socio-ecological practice and knowledge of a prior human presence.” This returns us to the discussion at the beginning of this chapter, colonialism and with it modernity are constituted and legitimised through the denial of their alterity; a denial that according to Gill, is itself made possible by the instalment of doubt upon the colonised bodies. Indigenous agency and their capacity to act upon the land and translate the landscape to the newly arrived, made necessary the constitution of an externalized nature—with it the constitution of a virgin land—where not only is Indigenous agency invisibilised but also their humanity is denied.

The disarticulation of indigenous socio-ecological co-constitution enables the settler- colonial subjectivity to displace its own “fear of engulfment” through the re-articulation of the Americas as a passive frontier of bountiful nature awaiting its rightful mastery by the rationality embodied in the person of the Euro-Christian settler. [...] The colonial “material-conceptual” landscape transformations of the Americas constitute, in particular, the “originary” ground for the emergence, in inextricable concert with one another, of the “two

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<sup>58</sup> I am borrowing this notion from Rabasa (2010) and his book entitled ‘Without History: Subaltern Studies, the Zapatista Insurgency, and the Specter of History.’

conceptual dichotomies axiomatic to modernism”: European/non-European and society/nature. Based upon such a reconceptualization of the “austral scene of discovery” of the Americas as generative, rather than derivative, of the epistemic and material transformations informing capitalist development[.] (Gill 2016, 115)

Ontology as conceptualised here does not just as denote something ‘out there,’ rather he maintains that it also “refers to ways of worlding,” of enacting the world (Blaser 2014b, 54, 2013a, 551). Modernity understood as ontology, refers to a particular way of enacting the world, that emerges in response to the problems set by Spanish conquest and is maintained through the subsequent colonisation (Blaser 2013a, 554-555). Accordingly Blaser argues similarly to Vazquez or Dussel that:

the two great divides (nature/culture and modern/nonmodern) and its correlated temporal matrix are not just historically coemergent, they are cosustaining. The implication being that performing a modern world in which this arrangement of threads constitutes the ontological bedrock necessarily involves keeping at bay the threat posed to it by the radically different ways of worldings with which it is nevertheless entangled. (Blaser 2013a, 554)

In other words, the negation of alterity and its denial do not just legitimise colonial violence and conquest, rather they are constitutive and cosustaining elements of a process through which a particular story of the world, as divided between culture/nature, modern/non-modern, rational/irrational is enacted and normalised, and its founding assumptions rendered invisible. The story of modernity and with it a regime of knowledge is affirmed as an all-encompassing account of ‘the real’ as being something out there that can be accessed through more or less accurate (cultural) representation/perspective of it. The separation of culture/nature is already assumed within the story of modernity and as such it remains outside of the realm of the questionable. In other words, the capacity to understand the division between culture and nature, implies a privileged (scientific) access to reality, that is denied to everyone else who denies this distinction, relegating their claims of the ‘real’ into the realm of belief, as part of a particular cultural perspective of a single reality.

In this sense, a key element in building and maintaining the hegemony of modernity has been the spectacular feats afforded by the experimental sciences since the sixteenth century onward. First, they

contributed plausibility to the emergent story of modernity as a progressive movement marked by the increasing mastery of nature, and second, they became the anchor for a regime of knowledge that we may call “universal science” that claimed to be able to get to the Truth while disqualifying all other ways of knowing as beliefs. (Blaser 2013a, 555)

Other ways of knowing and being are thus necessarily deemed inferior and disregarded, relegated to realm of belief as ‘more or less’ perspectives of the real out there. ‘Universal science’ thus (re)organises the world along the separation between an objective world out there (nature) and our subjective perspective (culture) of it. Knowledge, scientific knowledge is measured around the capacity to have clearer and less biased ‘perspectives’ of the real ‘out there.’ Thus the capacity to distinguish between nature and culture, the profane (manifest) and the sacred (divine) is key in evaluating the ability of having anything to say about the real ‘out there.’ Modernity as a ‘storied performativity’ tells us “what kinds of things (e.g. subjects and objects) and relations (e.g. of perspective) make up this particular world.” (Blaser 2014b, 54) As a result any forms of ‘knowing’ that do not respect the strict separation between nature and the divine are not recognised as valid knowledge practices and are necessarily pushed into the realm of belief and the irrational.<sup>59</sup> Shilliam (2017, 276) argues along similar lines when he affirms that:

colonial science seeks to segregate peoples from their lands, their pasts, their ancestors, spirits and agencies. Indeed, I have claimed that the deepest cut made by colonial science lies in the attempt to cleave the manifest realm of colonial rule from the uncolonized spiritual hinterlands.

Shilliam suggest that ‘colonial science’<sup>60</sup> as he calls it, not only denigrates knowledge practices that do not start from the nature/culture divide, but it also constrains the types of relationships that are deemed sensible and can be acknowledged. Thus instead of a science of deep relation, where “the material must be apprehended as

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<sup>59</sup> A similar point is raised by Marisol De la Cadena (2010, 2015).

<sup>60</sup> Even though there are subtle differences between what Blaser calls ‘universal science’ and what Shilliam calls ‘colonial science’, both concepts are used to explain similar process of knowledge production that originated out of the European colonial experience and helped consolidate and legitimise European colonialism. In this sense, I use the terms interchangeably as synonyms throughout the thesis.

material-and-spiritual, [...] in colonial science the spiritual must be profaned, that is, it must be transmogrified into a material cause (or ideology or symbol) so as to be captured by imperial logic.” (Shilliam 2015, 21)

Bringing back Blaser’s analysis and critique of modernity we can affirm that it is not enough to rethink reality as it is proposed within Science and Technology Studies as “always in the making through the dynamic relations of heterogeneous assemblages involving more-than-humans.” (Blaser 2014b, 54) Although in many ways such reconceptualisations expand the ontological armature, proposing ontological heterogeneity and fluidity, where the real is depicted as “socio-material worlds as always-emergent heterogeneous assemblages of humans and more-than-humans.” (Blaser 2014b, 50) Thus ‘overflowing’ the more ‘conventional’ modernist ontological assumptions by asserting the ‘livingness’ of the world, where agency is distributed between human and more-than-human agents upsetting dominant divisions between nature/culture, human/non-human, animate/inanimate. However Blaser observes that the entities invoked in order to ‘overflow’ modernist ontology remain within the established realm of the sensible. In other words, understanding the real ‘as always-emergent heterogeneous assemblages’ opens up the possibility of understanding the world as composed through always shifting assemblages composed by a heterogeneity of living entities. Yet as Blaser asks, even though they

open themselves to the question of living together with the creatures of technoscience, and yet do not seem to address the concerns of those who know that Gods, djinns and spirits matter? The absence of these kinds of entities is telling with regards to the homogeneity of assumptions that help to sort out legitimate from illegitimate matters of concern. (Blaser 2014b, 51)

The critique thus remains within the realm of the sensible as established through colonial science. As Shilliam observed in the earlier quote, the relations between the ‘material and spiritual’ do not even come into consideration. Rather, it is as Shilliam (2015, 21) explains; they are subsumed, “transmogrified into a material cause (or ideology or symbol)”. This juxtaposes reason with belief, a categorisation that is embodied within the coloniser/colonised dichotomy. The relations between the material and the spiritual are denigrated, and systematically denied in favour of the idea of a segregated understanding between the manifest and the sacred domain. Or in Blaser’s terms, as separation between a ‘world (manifest) out there’ of which one

can access more or less accurately through culture. The spiritual and sacred thus get reduced to culture. Shilliam thus challenges us to question this when he writes:

But what if we were to take seriously the above provocation that the categorical segregation of primitive/superstitious/(black) unreason and civilised/Christian/(white) reason is an artefact of colonial science? Not a transparent premise of science per se, might this segregation be part of a political project to cleave the manifest realm of colonial rule from the uncolonised spiritual hinterlands? With this provocation I am asking you to take a step sideways to colonial science.

(Shilliam 2017, 278)

In this sense, Shilliam invites us to think not beyond, or in spite of colonial science, and I would add modernity, but beside it. In other words to think other-wise to it. Blaser encourages us to take a similar step when he states that what is needed is not just a shift of ontology to being heterogeneous or fluid assemblages, but what is needed is the recognition of multiple heterogeneous assemblages:

My commentary underscores the point that we are not only dealing with a shifting ontology, a (re)animated world (if it ever was not animated), but we are dealing with multiple ontologies, a multiplicity of worlds animated in different ways. Put in other words, if the heterogeneity of always emerging assemblages troubles the political, the very heterogeneity of these heterogeneous assemblages troubles it even more. (Blaser 2014b, 51)

This multiplicity of heterogeneous assemblages is a 'political ontology' through which the *pluriverse*<sup>61</sup> is performed. The *pluriverse* he proposes, is not as a matter of fact, or some sort of overarching truth. But serves as a heuristic proposition that brings itself into being through 'storied performativity:'

Storied performativity underscores the connection between stories and practices (which in turn stresses the extent to which the terms *ontologies*, *worlds/worlding*, and *stories* are synonyms). [...] stories are not

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<sup>61</sup> Over the past couple of years authors like Marisol de la Cadena (2010, 2015), Arturo Escobar (2003, 2007), Mario Blaser (2009, 2013b, 2014a, 2016) have produced key contributions to the conceptualization of the pluriverse. More recently this concept has been taken up within the International Relations literature by authors like Tamar Trowsell (2013), Arlene Tickner and David Blaney (2017), Cristina Roja's (2013), Amaya Querejazu (2015, 2016a) and María R. Firmino (2016).

only or not mainly denotative (referring to something “out there”), nor are they fallacious renderings of real practices. Rather, they partake in the performance of that which they narrate. (Blaser 2013a, 552 emphasis in the original)

In this sense, the *pluriverse* is in a constant process of becoming, and has to be continuously performed, it implies a worlding of a world within many worlds. The *pluriverse* should not be understood as the affirmation of a ‘meta’ reality composed by multiple worlds that is describable and observable. In doing so one risks simply replacing ontology with culture, and reproducing the modernist ontological armature Blaser is trying to escape. Blaser suggests that worlding the *pluriverse* implies shrinking modernity in order to allow something else to exist. In this sense, it is not a denial of modernity or its material reality, nor does it infer modernity as a monolithic story, rather as Blaser argues its purpose is to show an ‘other-wise’ to modernity. The *pluriverse* thus emerges as “a foundationless foundational claim, which [...] means that it is an experiment on bringing itself into being.” (Blaser 2013a, 552) It follows that the pluriverse does not seek to describe and provide an observation, rather according to Blaser it is about the possibilities of an ‘other-wise’ that this claim enables.

If we return to the quotations in the epigraph to this chapter, we can start to reformulate the provocation these statements are invoking. The claim that music is life and inherently ritualistic, worlding, enacting the relations between the material and spiritual worlds, it can no longer just be dismissed as symbols of the Aymara or Quechua people use to express and consolidate a depiction of a cultural revivalism, an ideological response to modernity, mobilising their precolonial origins. In doing so, one reduces rituals as forms of ethnic/cultural/symbolic capital that can be mobilised in order to achieve some sort of transformation of ‘the real out there.’ In other words, this line of critique can only conceptualise these performances as nothing more than a number of symbols invoked in order to advance particular politics of recognition and ethnic politicking. As a consequence, the founding assumptions of the modernist ontology remain unchallenged.

The claim that music is not a spectacle, or just some form of entertainment in this sense, then, is not just calling for a politics of recognition, rather as I will demonstrate throughout the remainder of this thesis it is also a call for us to pay attention to an ‘other-wise,’ and a worlding that accompanies the *wayñus* and the crying of the



*pinkillus*. Chapters three to six thus further explore what kind of worlding process are being storied by looking at the practice of music by urban autochthonous musicians. In doing so it seeks to think through the possibilities of decolonisation that have been so widely invoked over the past decades in Bolivian politics.

The thesis seeks to take the experience and ideas of urban autochthonous musicians seriously. It seeks to engage with those worlds, and spiritual hinterlands that are invoked through Andean autochthonous music. In so doing it seeks to map the realm of the possible that results out of the crying *pinkillu* and the 'life giving' *wayñu* melodies (see Chapter 6). Following Mújica (2009) the research project takes up the question of 'For who do you play?'<sup>62</sup>

¿Al final, para quién tocamos? ¿Estés en la ciudad, estés en el campo para quién tocas? Y allí nos lleva a ese vínculo ritual, realmente espiritual. ¿O sea, el individuo toca porque va a ir al escenario para que la gente vea y lo aplaudan, va a tocar para el músico o va a tocar para estos ciclos que se van regenerando, estos ciclos climatológicos del que a veces románticamente hablamos? ¿Para quién tocamos en la ciudad?<sup>63</sup>

This questioning encourages us to see beyond the practice of autochthonous music as an artistic practice. In this sense, the following chapters explore music as a complex, interdependent, historically and politically situated practice that is in constant process of worlding. It does so by looking into the different dimensions, and different discourses that are invoked by urban autochthonous musicians in the cities of Cochabamba and La Paz. Each chapter thus seeks to turn over the soil upon which we stand, hoping to find different points through which we can relate and establish other worlds. Doing so is an attempt to explore the different possibilities of an 'otherwise' that autochthonous music seems to offer.

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<sup>62</sup> This question has also been raised and further discussed in a series of articles recently published by Mújica (2014, 2017)

<sup>63</sup> At the end for who do we play? Be it in the city, be it on the country side, who do you play for? And that takes us to that ritual link, truly spiritual. Meaning, does the individual play because he goes on stage so that the people can see and applaud to him, does he go to play for the musician, or does he go to play for these cycles that are being regenerated, these climatological cycles we sometimes romantically refer to? For who do we play in the city? (My translation) Interview with RM 03.04.2014

## Chapter 3: The *Kurmi* and Urban autochthonous groups in Bolivia

For twenty years the *Encuentro Cultural Kurmi* have been participating during the third weekend of October at the *Fiesta de San Miguel, San Rafael, San Gabriel*, (generally referred to as simply 'the *Fiesta de San Miguel*') the patron saint festival of Tiquipaya. From its beginnings the objective of the group was to promote and vindicate different Indigenous cultures through the reproduction and presentation of their music and dances within Tiquipaya and the area of Cochabamba.

This chapter is centred around the *Kurmi* as part of a wider network of urban autochthonous music groups, who have been engaged in an effort to document, vindicate, valorise and perform Andean cultural practices within urban spaces since the 1970s and 1980s. In doing so, I argue that these groups not only have been heavily influenced by the Indigenous organisation and movements, but that they have attempted to actively shape and influence public opinion in favour of the Indigenous cause for liberation and self-determination but also of recognition within the Bolivian State and society in general. In this way, I look at the social and political implications and challenges the groups are confronted with on a daily basis and how music has become an organising principle guiding their decisions.

The chapter begins by following the *Kurmi* and their origins within the pedagogical experience of the *Comunidad Educativa Ecológica La Floresta de Montecillo* (Educational Ecological Community *La Floresta* of Montecillo, or '*La Floresta*' for short) and its activities within the region of Tiquipaya. In this sense, the chapter seeks to better understand different ideas and propositions they developed over time, as well as challenges they have faced. In particular the chapter looks at how over time, music has changed the way urban autochthonous groups such as the *Kurmi* saw the world and themselves. The chapter is an attempt to situate the group's motivations and driving forces within the wider context of urban autochthonous groups and society at large. It also analyses the possibility and implication of using autochthonous music as a political and anti-colonial vindication. The chapter ends by exploring the notion of nurturing music as a path that allowed the *Kurmi* to engage the possibility of something else, an 'other-wise,' a 'beside' western centric modernity. In so doing the chapter opens up the possibility of conceiving music as a world making practice.

### 3.1. The *Kurmi* of Tiquipaya

My first encounter with the members of the *Kurmi* was in the neighbourhood of Encanto Pampa, a little more than one and half kilometres north of the centre of Tiquipaya. I had been invited a couple of weeks earlier to participate in an event for the spring equinox on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2013. With only one month to go before their most important annual event, the *Fiesta de San Miguel*, the *Kurmi* had invited friends and family to begin the preparations for the event. Preparations beyond the musical practices also entailed the arrangement of the place to host the guests, coming from all over the country for the four days of celebration.

By the time I had made my way up to the house in Encanto Pampa, they had already begun with the ritual offering of the *q'uwa*.<sup>64</sup> The attendees gathered in a circle around a little fire that had been prepared for this occasion. The *pasantes*<sup>65</sup> of the fiesta, the *kamachij*<sup>66</sup> (current leader of the group) together with others tasked with organising the coming festival, started the ceremony by each giving a little speech for the occasion. A ritual dish placed on a piece of paper with many different ingredients, arranged to look like a nest or a dish (referred generally as *mesa* or *misa*<sup>67</sup>) was receiving its final preparations before being placed on the glowing ember by the *pasantes*. Following the customs they went to pour libations (*ch'allar*), of alcohol and *chicha* (an alcoholic beverage made out of maize), walking anticlockwise around the four corners of the burning *mesa*, whilst praying and asking the *Pachamama* and the surrounding *Apus* for their blessing, strength, goodwill and inspiration, in order to be able to carry out a successful patron saint festival. A little plastic bottle with pure alcohol was then passed around the participants for everyone to perform the *ch'alla*

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<sup>64</sup> The *q'uwa*, also often written as *q'oa*, refers both to a complex ritual offering as well as to a small Andean bush called 'Wira Q'uwa.' According to van den Berg (1990, 318) the plant is "usually used in offerings as an olfactory gift for the natural forces." See also Chapter 5 for a more detailed account of the *q'uwa* ritual.

<sup>65</sup> *Pasantes* refers to those people chosen every year to host (*pasar*), organise and finance the Patron Saint Festivities of the group. See also Chapter 4 for a more detailed account of the *Fiesta system*.

<sup>66</sup> Similar to other urban autochthonous music groups and communities the *Kurmi* use the nomenclature dominant within rural Andean communities in order to refer to their chosen authorities.

<sup>67</sup> Van den Berg (1990, 317) defines the term *misa* as an offering with many different ingredients: "It is a piece of paper, on which according to the purpose of the offering a certain quantity of vegetable, animal, mineral, food and other type of ingredients are placed. These ingredients constitute olfactory, food or especial gifts directed to natural forces and express specific wishes."

and express in their prayers their hopes and wishes for the coming fiesta. In the meantime a *tropa* of *moseños* (also written as *mohoceños* or *musiñu*), the chosen instruments for the year, were distributed among the musicians. After a couple of rounds had been played, and a couple of *tutumas*<sup>68</sup> of *chicha* were offered to everyone by the *pasantes*, everyone slowly moved up to a little house in the corner of the plot of land where we were offered food and beverages.

The *Kurmi* are an autochthonous music group based in Tiquipaya, where most of its members live, work or have family. In 2014 they had between 15 and 20 active members who took part in different events, parades and festivals in Cochabamba throughout the year. There are about 50 members that usually come together for the celebration of *Fiesta de San Miguel* once a year. The majority of the active members today are in their twenties and thirties and can be considered to be part of the middle class or lower middle class in Cochabamba. Most have finished an academic education or at least have started a university degree at some point. The *Kurmi* are characterised in particular because most of its members are former students and instructors of the alternative school *La Floresta* of Montecillo, Tiquipaya. These deep roots within *La Floresta* and its particular pedagogical experience attracted people from all over Bolivia. As a result, the *Kurmi* brought together a very diverse membership from their beginning, with people coming from Germany and Argentina, and within Bolivia from Cochabamba, Oruro, La Paz, Potosí and Chuquisaca.

The story of the *Kurmi* begins in October 1996 during the parade for the *Fiesta de San Miguel* in Tiquipaya, when a mixed group, composed of children, teenagers and adults entered the town dancing to the distinctive sound of the *tarkas* as one can see on Figures 5 to 8. The students and educators of the newly founded alternative school *La Floresta*, together with members of the urban autochthonous music groups *C.I.C.A. Ayllu*, *Pusisuyu*,<sup>69</sup> were participating in the parade in an attempt to reach out and

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<sup>68</sup> A *tutuma* or also *totuma* is a vessel or bowl made out of the fruits of the Tutumo tree (Calabash Tree)

<sup>69</sup> C.I.C.A. Ayllu (*Centro de Investigación de las Culturas Andinas "Ayllu"* Centre of research of Andean cultures "Ayllu") and the Pusisuyu emerged in the first half of the 1980s. Together with groups such as the *Comunidad Laboral Santo Domingo* and *Wiñay Marka*, these groups managed to carve out a space in the cultural scene of the valley of Cochabamba for autochthonous music, becoming regular guests at civic events, as well as in concert halls such as the Teatro Achá in Cochabamba and in the patron saint festivities such as the *Fiesta de Urqupiña* Quillacollo or the *Fiesta de San Miguel* in Tiquipaya.

promote their pedagogical project to a wider audience within the village of Tiquipaya.

From this first parade the group was characterised by an attempt to bring likeminded people together, in some ways anticipating some of the characteristics that the *Kurmi* would develop over the following two decades. But comparing this first performance with later performances also reveals some of the transformations that occurred within the group. Compared with the performance I was able to witness both in 2013 and 2014, the first performance was rather small and modest, without much celebration, as one of the educators remembered: “El primer año no hubo fiesta así con comida. Sólo hemos bailado el 96. Los chicos apenas estaban empezando a tocar la tarka ¿no?”<sup>70</sup> Although many of the children had only started to play musical instruments such as the *tarka* at the beginning of the school year in February of that year, the performance in 1996 left a long-lasting impact on the children as well as within Tiquipaya. As one of the members who was present at the time recalls:

Como éramos niños, yo incluso digo por mí, para la mayoría era sólo aprender ¿no? Porque era algo nuevo, algo lindo. Lindo en ese momento porque todos éramos niños curiosos. Y vernos así tocando, así changos, cuando vemos las fotos así nos acordamos también de esos momentos ¿no? [...]

O sea, siempre hemos estado haciendo música desde ese entonces, y al año [1997] ha sido mucho más fuerte. O sea, como [que] nos ha marcado el 96 la entrada de San Miguel. Hemos creado esa impresión con la misma gente de Tiquipaya y con la sociedad también.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> “The first year there was no party with food, we only danced in 96. The children barely began to play the tarka right?” (My translation) Interview with GCC 8.12.13

Graciela Choque Cárdenas was born in the Inquisivi Province of the Department of La Paz, she moved in 1996 to Cochabamba. She started working as a teacher at *La Floresta* school in 1996. She eventually became the director of the school before it closed in the year 2000. Despite her connections with the *Floresta*, she only joined the *Kurmi* in 2012. In 2013 she and her partner Sandro Ramiro Revollo together with Carmen Rosa Quispe and Julio Pacheco were the *pasantes* of the *Kurmi* for the *Fiesta de San Miguel*. She works as a teacher at the *Centro de Educación Técnico Humanística y Agropecuaria Tiraque*.

<sup>71</sup> As we were children, I would even say for me, for the majority it was only about learning, right? Because it was something new, something beautiful. Beautiful in that moment because we were all curious children. And when we see ourselves playing like that, being young, when we see the photos, we also remember those moments right? [...]

That is, we have made music ever since that moment, and the following year [1997] it [the feeling] was even stronger. That is how the San Miguel parade of 96 has marked us. And we also created an impression, with the very people of Tiquipaya and society as well. (My translation) FF in group interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.13

They entered the town led by several dancers waving their *Wiphalas*<sup>72</sup> and dancing to the sound of a *tarka* ensemble (see Figure 6). They presented an unfamiliar image for the spectators, accustomed to the usual *Diablada* of the local Transportation Union, or the *Morenada Central* composed by migrants from Oruro. Their presentation stood in contrast with these dominant dances, characterised by dancers in expensive, colourful and shiny costumes, neatly organised in well-defined squads, dancing synchronically in choreographed steps to the music produced by brass bands, strategically positioned in between the different squads to best project the music to as many dancers as possible. The performance of the *tarka* was not only different on a sonic and melodic level given the wooden instruments; the entire performance was different. It was centred more on the musicians and less on the dancers, as was the case with the more popular dances at the time. Autochthonous music is composed by a single family of instruments, often only accompanied by percussion instruments. In the case of the *tarka*, for instance, all players play approximately the same melody, and the different instruments are supposed to merge together so as to create one 'global sound' (Gérard A 2010c, 117). This 'global sound' is dense and rich in harmonics. This way of playing thus provides a completely different sonic experience and different aesthetics, especially if compared with the brass bands that dominate the parade, whose melodies are composed through the sum of different instruments playing different aspects of the overall melody.

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Favio Fernández Pardo, 30 years old, was born and raised in Tiquipaya. He studied biology at the Universidad Mayor de San Simon in Cochabamba. As one of the long time leaders of the *Kurmi* he was one of the drivers pushing for the creation of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. Between 2013-2014 he was a member of the directive of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. As a student of *La Floresta* school he has been a member of the *Kurmi* since their first performance in 1996.

<sup>72</sup> The *Wiphalas* had become from the 1980s and in particular during the 1990s one of the main symbols of the Indigenous movements and organisations.



Figure 5: Schoolchildren from the Floresta at the Entrada de San Miguel in Tiquipaya 1996, playing tarka, dressed in typical jackets, trousers and hats of the Indigenous communities in North of Potosí. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*.



Figure 6: In the front of the picture we have Rafael Puente, founding member of the school, leading the children, waving a *wiphala*. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*.





Figure 7: Schoolchildren from the Floresta playing the tarka in an attire of the Indigenous communities of North Potosí Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*.



Figure 8: The picture shows the dancers and musicians playing and dancing in front of the old mail and telephone offices of the village. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*.



Of course, many of these issues and reflections were not at the forefront of the children's minds back in 1996. Although they had participated in the different civic processions throughout the year where they played the classical marches with the *siku*, the patron saint festival of *San Miguel* was the first performance of autochthonous music for them.<sup>73</sup> These early experiences were also important in introducing the children to the world of urban autochthonous groups in Cochabamba, providing them with access to a scene where they could perform and explore the music further. In many ways, this first experience became a catalyst for many to explore the Andean world with its music, rituals, and politics. During the first couple of years of the *Kurmi*, in particular during their time under the tutelage of the school, the practice of music and autochthonous instruments was driven by the children's desire to learn rather than any form of political motivation. One of the music instructors of the school explained the process in the following way:

Entonces tenía un taller así de instrumentos y la idea era [...] que se anotan quienes quieren, que escogen sus cosas [instrumentos], muy bien nos vemos en 40 minutos. Cada uno trabaja lo que quiere hacer. Aunque no haga nada, también es hacer. Entonces yo acompaño mientras. Mientras va pasando el tiempo, algunos quieren estar sacando algo en guitarra, pero la mayoría quieren tocar zampoñas ¿no? Y el contestado<sup>74</sup> [hace referencia a la forma de tocar la zampoña entre dos músicos para producir la melodía] les encanta, contestar así changuitos.<sup>75</sup>

In line with the emphasis on personal development, the aim was not to train professional musicians. In this sense, it was not seen as a core module of the school at the beginning of the school year. The introduction of music as part of the

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<sup>73</sup> Interview with GCC 08.12.2013

<sup>74</sup> *Contestado* or interlocking in English refers to the particular way the pan flute are played between two musicians who in order to be able produce a melody have to interlock their instruments.

<sup>75</sup> I had a workshop with instruments. The idea was that those who wanted to would choose their things [instruments] and then we would meet again in 40 minutes. Everyone would work on what they wanted, and even if they wouldn't do anything that is also doing something. In the meantime I would accompany them; some wanted to play something on the guitar, but the majority wanted to play the pan flute right? And they loved the interlocking, [they were] interlocking [their pan flutes] even though they were just kids. (My translation) Interview with DT, 17.01.2014

David Továr, born in the city of Sucre, was the first music teacher of *La Floresta* school. As founding member of group *Naijama* he has been practicing Andean autochthonous music since the 1970s. In the late 1980's he moved to Switzerland where he earned his living playing music. In 1996 he returned with his family to Bolivia and settled in Tiquipaya.

curriculum offered by the school seems to have been driven through circumstance and personal engagement by the music instructors and the children themselves. In particular, the desire of the children to play music, and autochthonous music in particular, seems to have been a strong driving force behind the decision of the school to invest in the resources necessary to teach music. The *siku* in particular seems to have caught the attention of many children, as the excerpts of the accounts of former students and instructors show. The interest was not just because of the sonic experience or the songs the children learned, but also had something to do with very way the instrument was played. As we have established previously the *siku*, similar to other Andean wind instruments, is “played in large ensembles in which only the same type of melodic instrument is used.” (Turino 1993, 41) Each instrument is composed of two rows of canes “tuned so that the pitch series alternates between the two rows, requiring two musicians to interlock their respective *ira* and *arca*<sup>76</sup> parts to create a melody.” (Turino 1993, 44) As Stobart (2010b, 43) shows, the pairing of instruments is not unique to the *siku*; we can also find it among some types of *pinkillus*. The Melody emerges out of pairs of musicians *interlocking* their *iras* and *arkas*. Both musicians thus enter a relationship of complementarity where it is only through their interaction that the melody as such becomes audible. The interlocking between the *ira* and *arca* combined with the interplay between the different voices<sup>77</sup> create a sound that is “dense, sonorously rich and varied.” (Turino 1993, 44) Music is thus the result of many dialogues between *iras* and *arkas*, who can only create the desired sonic experience together. This communal practice of the music was an important reason for the children’s enthusiasm for the instruments. This was highlighted in the interview I had with the music instructor of the school.

Y como yo sabía muchos temas, entonces voy metiendo, metiendo sin darme cuenta [...], sin darnos cuenta nadie. [...] Entonces, a partir de la zampoña, del contestado, se va sembrando en los chicos la necesidad de depender del amigo, de depender del otro y no ser tan soberbio de decir yo, yo, yo, sino, nosotros.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> *Ira* and *Arca* are the designations used for both rows. The *ira* is made out of six or seven tubes and usually is the one that guides. The *arca* on the other hand is made out of seven or eight tubes, and follows the lead of the *ira*.

<sup>77</sup> The three most common voices starting with the smallest and highest are the *Suli*, *Malta* and *Sanja*

<sup>78</sup> And since I knew many songs I started to give, give without really realising, without anyone really noticing. Through the pan flute, the interlocking, a seed is sown in the children, to learn from the

The music helped the instructors approach questions of relationality, complementarity and co-dependency. As the interview excerpt shows, the practice of this communal practice helped 'sow the seed of community.' Similarly Windsor Martín Torrico Carvajal (2014) in his study of the use of autochthonous music as a pedagogical tool by the *Centro Cultural Willka Mayu* (Cultural Centre Willka Mayu, short *Willka Mayu*) suggests, the practice itself of the Andean instruments such as the siku and the interlocking of *ira* and *arka*, carries within it key moral and ethical principles of complementarity and relationality.

Ahí radica una de las ideas centrales de la técnica del trenzado [contestado], la cual pasa por comprender que la música es un diálogo de opuestos, y que mediante una relación complementaria y antagónica conforma la unidad musical del fraseo. Esta es una cualidad muy interesante, que hace parte del proceso de aprendizaje, ya que el hecho de aprender se da en el diálogo con otra persona (*arka* e *ira*), pero al mismo tiempo junto a otros; en ese contexto, las referencias, ejemplos y aclaraciones de los guías son como dibujos que le dan sentido y significado simbólico y metafórico a esa relación y proceso de aprendizaje al proceso, pero al mismo tiempo evoca la personalidad política y pedagógica de la música autóctona, para así poder diferenciarla del paradigma musical y educativo presente en el hecho musical moderno y occidental.<sup>79</sup> (Torrico Carvajal 2014, 61)

As Torrico Carvajal here shows, the musical performs not only nurtures relational and complementary relationships between the musicians but the music also carries lessons about leadership and ways of knowing and being. Even though curiosity was the driving force pushing the children to learn more about the music and the instruments, it is later once the group entered a process of reflection and analysis,

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friend, to depend on the other and not be so haughty and say 'I, I, I', and rather say 'we'. (My translation) Interview with DT, 17.01.2014.

<sup>79</sup> Therein lies one of the central ideas of the technique of braiding [interlocking], which involves understanding that music is a dialogue of opposites, and that through a complementary and antagonistic relationship the musical unit of phrasing conforms. This is a very interesting quality, which is part of the learning process, since the fact of learning is given in the dialogue with another person (*arka* and *ira*), but at the same time with others. In that context, the guides, references, examples, and explanations are like drawings that give sense as well as symbolic and metaphorical meaning to that relationship and process of learning of the process, but at the same time evokes the political and pedagogical personality of autochthonous music. In doing so, it is able to differentiate itself from the musical and educational paradigm present within modern and western musical [traditions]. (My translation)

where music started to become more than just a cultural or artistic manifestation. The school and its instructors, as we will discuss in more detail in the following section, were driven by an effort to change society by bringing the school curriculum closer to lives of its students and the communities they lived in. As one of the directors of the school recalls:

Era común en los educadores, en la mayoría [...], eran de izquierda ¿no? Raro, creo, que [ha] habido alguna persona [que] haya sido de derecha dentro del equipo [...] ¿no? Allí, la mayoría era de izquierda, yo también me incluyo entre los izquierdistas. Queríamos un cambio social, un cambio de sistema, eso. Dentro de eso [del equipo de educadores] había experiencias diferentes.<sup>80</sup>

In this sense, it was a pedagogical experience with a clear leaning towards the Indigenous cause. The choice of music and instrument as well as the use of the *Wiphala* thus were not accidental; rather, they indicated to the viewers the political and social tendencies of the school and their solidarity and alignment with the Indigenous peoples and their struggle for self-determination and self-governance in Bolivia. The following section discusses in more detail the pedagogical experience behind the *La Floresta*.

### 3.2. The *Kurmi* and *La Floresta*

Under the tutelage of the school, the group flourished, and their participation at the patron saint festival in Tiquipaya grew over the years. Moreover, the school provided stability, creating spaces for the children to explore, practice and perform. Crucially, the school was able to support the group's activities, providing instruments and covering transport costs among other things. But the influence of the school was more than its economic support or the musical opportunities it provided to its students. A recurrent theme in my conversations with the members of the *Kurmi* was

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<sup>80</sup> It was common that the majority of instructors were from the left, right? It was rare to have a person of the right in the team. [...] right? There the majority was from the left, myself included among the lefties. We wanted social change, a change of system. Within [the team of instructors] there we had different experiences. (My translation) Interview with GCC, 08.12.2013.

their experience during their time at the school. A member described it the following way:

Mas allá de eso, digamos, ha sido fundamental el modelo educativo para que esto [los Kurmis] en sí pueda surgir, y pueda estar vigente ya 18 años. Por lo menos yo lo veo de esta manera, de que el modelo educativo, alternativo, como decía RP, en comparación o en respuesta a otros sistemas educativos, ha sido a que nos lleve a formar este grupo de amigos ¿no? Mas que comunidad, este grupo de amigos, que nos hemos aguantado y nos estamos aguantando 18 años. Y esos, como decían los compañeros, nos estamos regenerando. No ha sido fácil, y no es fácil hasta ahora, por todo el proceso que hemos tenido. Porque ha sido algo que, phucha, algo nuevo aquí en Tiquipaya en sí, porque es donde hemos nacido como modelo educativo y como grupo, digamos.<sup>81</sup>

Through their musical performance the students of *La Floresta* stood out within Tiquipaya and were from early on confronted for being different from everyone else. This helped foster the friendships among the children that would become the foundations of the *Kurmi* today. But as the quote suggests, alongside their growing participation in the autochthonous scene of Cochabamba, the pedagogical and political project of *La Floresta* was also an important pillar. The school began working in the community of Collpapampa,<sup>82</sup> a small village west of Tiquipaya, in February 1996, before moving to Montecillo in 1997. The school was founded in the wake of the Educational Reform of 1994 that sought to ‘modernise’ and decentralise the educational system that had remained unchanged throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

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<sup>81</sup> Beyond that, let’s say, the educational model was fundamental so that this [the Kurmi] could emerge and be kept relevant for 18 years now. At least I see it that way, that the alternative educational model, as Roberto was saying, in comparison or in response to other educational systems, was what caused us to form this group of friends, right? More than a community, this is a group of friends that has endured each other and is enduring each other 18 years. And like the colleagues said, we are regenerating [now], it wasn’t easy, it isn’t easy until now because of the whole process we went through. Because it was something, damn/shoot, it was something new here in Tiquipaya, because it is where we were born as an educational model and we could say as a group. (My translation) JAC in interview with FF, RP, JAC. 18.11.13.

Juan Alberto Choque is a longtime member of the *Kurmi*. Similar to many others he joined the *Floresta* school in 1996 at the age of 15. As a profesional musician he regularly accompanies the *Kjarkjas* in their tours around the World. Born in Chorolque, Potosí he moved at a very young age with his family to Tiquipaya.

<sup>82</sup> Sometimes also written as *Qullpa-pampa*.

The Educational Reform of 1994 was part of a wide set of constitutional and institutional reforms seeking to modernise and transform the state and public management of Bolivia. Through these reforms Zambrana Vargas (2005, 16) affirms that the Bolivian State was trying to “adaptarse a la lógica y la racionalidad del modelo de desarrollo de economía liberal.”<sup>83</sup> The Educational Reform is part of the NPE (*Nueva Política Económica*, New Economic Policy), a set of wider institutional, political and economic reforms that began in 1985 with the infamous Supreme Decree N° 21060. This was a series of reforms that sought to liberalise the economy, moving away from a State centred economy and towards an integration of Bolivian economy into the liberal world economy. The NPE was one of the most aggressive institutional and economic restructurings in the region with severe consequences for the political and social landscape. The implications of the NPE were vast, leading to the growth of the informal sector and the deregulation of workers’ rights. By the 1990s, the left in Bolivia was going through a deep crisis, made manifest by its inability to articulate an alternative to the rampant neoliberal policies pushed through by the government. (Albro 2010b, Crabtree and Chaplin 2013, Webber 2011)

With the electoral victory of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada and the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (Revolutionary Nationalist Party, short MNR) in 1993 began what Webber (2011, 135) calls the second phase of neoliberal restructuring, that aimed to consolidate the neoliberal path set forth by the NPE, putting forward in the span of two years the Popular Participation Law, the Educational Reform Law, and Administrative Decentralisation Law, as well as reforming the constitution, recognising for the first time the cultural diversity of the country. As Zambrana (2005, 7-12) highlights, these reforms tried to make the NPE acceptable to a growing number of disenfranchised sectors. Sánchez de Lozada was keen to promote a multicultural integrationist agenda that promised to devolve economic and political power back to the communities.

Most significantly, in 1994, the new administration amended the constitution such that its first article now defines Bolivia as multiethnic and pluricultural. [...] In the MNR’s Plan de Todos,

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<sup>83</sup> “to adapt itself to the logic and rationality of a development model based on liberal economy” (My translation)

indigenous cultural issues were integral components to the justification and legitimisation of educational reform, land-reform, and decentralised popular participation. (Webber 2011, 138)

The Educational Reform thus was as much an attempt to address the needs emerging out of changing economy, as well as to satisfy the population by updating an educational system that had remained largely unchanged since the 1970s. The reform was based on two pillars: one that aimed to transform the organisational and institutional aspect of the educational system, and a second that targeted the pedagogical aspect. In line with the Administrative Decentralisation and Popular Participation Laws, the educational system was decentralised and its decision making devolved to the local level. Parent-school councils were promoted and strengthened, providing them with rights as well as administrative and organisational responsibilities, in an effort to devolve decision making powers not just to regional and local governments but to the local populations through the parent-school councils (Contreras and Talavera Simoni 2003, Zambrana Vargas 2005). As Contreras and Talavera Simoni (2003, 1) explained in a report to the World Bank:

Parental involvement was achieved through promotion and strengthening of parent-school councils throughout the system's 12,000 schools. Participatory education councils were set up at the municipal and departmental levels, as well as for indigenous peoples. The government decentralized the responsibility for education infrastructure and provision of school supplies to the municipal level.

On a pedagogical level the reform proposed a move away from a behaviourist and teacher centred pedagogical model, and towards "a constructivist approach centered on students and based on active learning" (Contreras and Talavera Simoni 2003, 1).<sup>84</sup> The curriculum proposed a move away from a homogenising and civilising curriculum, and teacher training that sought to assimilate and integrate the different cultures and peoples into a Hispanic centric, westernised nation state, instead advocating a move towards an intercultural bilingual education (Zambrana Vargas 2005, 17).

But as several authors (Albó 2002, Camargo Manuel 2005, Kohl 2003, Mamani Ramírez 2004, Webber 2011) have concluded these attempts to reform the State and

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<sup>84</sup> For a more detailed account see also Cruz, Quintanilla and Salomón (2005, 282-283).

society were difficult to implement in many cases due to lack of resources and institutional support. Moreover, the inclusion and promotion of an intercultural curriculum based on respect and recognition of indigenous peoples, cultures and languages aimed to consolidate the efforts by the government to present the ongoing neoliberal reform with a social, friendly face. The reform of 1994 set an unprecedented tone of intercultural dialogue, respect and acceptance, yet as Saaresranta and Hinojosa (2011, 18) affirm “[e]l enfoque intercultural de la educación quedó muy limitado y el trato de los conocimientos indígena originarios en el nivel ‘folclórico’.”<sup>85</sup> This conclusion is further shared by Bustamante Morales (2005, 58) when she observes that:

los módulos que se vienen utilizando en las escuelas en el marco de la Reforma Educativa, si bien se preocupan en mostrar la existencia en nuestro país de las distintas culturas, lo hacen como si esa realidad estuviera, ¡allaaá lejos!, haciendo que los niños aprendan esa realidad multicultural de manera teórica solamente[.]<sup>86</sup>

Bustamante Morales concludes that the reform never aimed to recognise the different indigenous and marginalised groups within their own terms. Rather it was yet another attempt to transform them into liberal consuming subjects. As a result, even though it presented a number of seemingly radical propositions, its implementation remained partial and superficial, and largely a top down imposition, failing to provoke substantive transformation of the educational curriculum. The reform was reduced to an institutional reorganisation, providing more power to local influence groups and authorities through the empowerment of parents’ organisations. It did not provide enough resources and the assistance and training necessary on the local level to be able to make significant changes to the pedagogical format or the content taught within the schools. Paradoxically, the inability to completely push through with a new pedagogical project by the State, however, also opened up space within the educational system for those sectors of society who had already been critical of the standard approaches to the educational system, providing

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<sup>85</sup> “the intercultural focus of the education remained very limited and the handling of indigenous knowledge remained on a ‘folkloric’ level.” (My translation)

<sup>86</sup> “even though the modules, being used in the schools within the framework of the Educational Reform, are preoccupied with showing the existence of different cultures in our country, they do this as if that reality was faaaar away! As a result the children learn that multicultural reality only in theory.” (My translation)



them with space and tools to implement new educational experiences (Saaresranta, Díaz, and Hinojosa 2011, Zambrana Vargas 2005).

The beginnings of the school *La Floresta* were humble, marked by economic uncertainty, inadequate infrastructure and a 'learning by doing' attitude by all involved in the project. The school was, in many ways, a unique pedagogical experiment in the Bolivian context. As such, the educators were creating the curriculum and pedagogical line as they went along. The educational project of *La Floresta* was, as I was able to gather from my fieldwork, launched by a group of people with diverse political and activist backgrounds; many of them had been active members of different political and social movements and organisations, with long track records of community organising and political activism. They were brought together by their dissatisfaction with the educational system, its rigid and hierarchical pedagogical practices, and westernised content. Even though the new educational reform of 1994 employed seemingly 'radical' and progressive language, there were little to no signs that these policies would be implemented within the public or private schools. As a founding member recounted:

Buscábamos algo diferente, y nos hemos reunido como unos diez papás-mamás en la casa de Rafo y hemos dicho, oye ¿qué hacemos? Haremos algo, no pueden estar en esta escuela que no estamos de acuerdo. Entonces, ahí nos decidimos: ¡ya, hagamos la escuela!. Hagamos una escuela que esté mas cerca de los principios con los que siempre hemos vivido ¿no? Y nos habíamos reunido y pensado, y repensado, ¿cómo haríamos, dónde, cómo, con qué plata? No teníamos plata, no teníamos terreno, no teníamos nada. Lo único que teníamos eran los hijos que queríamos que estudien.<sup>87</sup>

*La Floresta* was an experiment in creating an alternative pedagogical curriculum that builds on the Montessori/Pestalozzi pedagogical school, the pedagogy of Liberation,

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<sup>87</sup> We were looking for something different, so about ten fathers and mothers came together in the house of Rafo, where we asked ourselves, what would we do? Let's do something, [our children] cannot go to a school that we disagree with. So we decided there, to create the school. Let's make a school that is closer to our principles, right? So we came together and we thought and rethought how, where and with what money we could do it. We didn't have money, we didn't have the land, we didn't have anything, the only thing we had were our children who we wanted to be able to study. (My translation) Interview with EF, 15.01.2014.

Elena Fuertes Aramaya from Uncía, Potosí is a long time civil rights activist and educator, she was one of the founders and first teachers at the *La Floresta*.

and combines it with the experiences of the *escuela-ayllu* (Ayllu school) of *Warisata*<sup>88</sup> in the first half of the twentieth century and more contemporary experiences of the Jesuit School *Juan XXIII*. In his account of the schools, Nagata similarly argues that: “[w]hile being influenced by the Pestalozzi School, this school has put into practice a combination of tradition and innovation that are interwoven according to its own unique principles” (Nagata 2006, 12). The intentions of the founding members were to create an integrated and holistic school, trying to emulate the *escuela-ayllu*, proposing a coherent alternative curriculum from nursery school up to high school.<sup>89</sup> The idea was to allow for a more dynamic and open educational system for the children that would allow each student to advance at their own speed. As Nagata (2006, 12-23) observes, a lot of weight was put within its curriculum on respect for the individual preferences, personal development and self-control of each child throughout their entire education. Moreover, the curriculum inspired by the pedagogy of liberation and other contemporary theoretical debates was concerned to provide an education that is socially and ecologically minded, and, in aspiration at least, is closer to the everyday lives of the people.

The school was also an attempt to respond to some of the failings of the Marxist and trade unionised left to provide a political and social alternative to the neoliberal project promoted by the centres of economic and political power. The educational reform of 1994 was an attempt to co-opt different ideas and projects that had been growing within different rural and urban sectors, in particular within the indigenous movements (Zambrana Vargas 2005). The Floresta managed to bring together some of these ideas and projects and translate them to the semi-urban context of Tiquipaya and Montecillo. As the quote earlier in this chapter clearly shows, many members, parents and staff members of the school had previous political activity. As one of the founding members of the school recounted: “Era bien interesante, mira, éramos un

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<sup>88</sup> The *Ayllu* school of *Warisata* was “an extraordinary intercultural experiment in indigenous schooling that flourished between 1931 and 1940 on the high plateau (altiplano)” (Larson 2011). It was particularly well known for its curriculum that integrated agricultural practices with academic work in a bilingual teaching context. As the name states, the school drew on the Aymara community as its foundation, and relied on its structures for its maintenance. The educational experiment was unique for its time, and even though it was eventually closed, it was a mile stone, setting the bar for rural and indigenous education. For a more nuanced and comprehensive account of the Warisata as a social and pedagogical experience see (Salazar Mostajo 2013, 1992, Mora 2011, Giraudo 2010).

<sup>89</sup> Interviews with EF 15.01.2017, GCC 08.12.2017, DT 17.01.2017.

grupo de gente con historia política bien radical de mucho tiempo.”<sup>90</sup> They saw the school as a tool through which they could contribute to the construction of a new society through a progressive and socially minded pedagogical process.

As discussed above, despite the reform, the educational system remained rigged and blind to the issues many Bolivians were facing in their day to day lives, in particular when it came to racial and colonial issues. Moreover, the left’s inherent colonial, homogenising and paternalistic view of the indigenous and popular sectors of Bolivia coincided with the ‘westernising’ and western centric curriculums that had been proposed over the course of the twentieth century. In many ways, the school was part of a broader effort across society that was seeking to meaningfully transform the educational system, and to introduce different social issues and critical perspectives into the curriculum, particularly when it came to questions of cultural diversity.

It is significant to note that even though the school went to great lengths to propose an educational program that would respect the immediate context of the social and political context it was situated in, the communities of Collpapampa and Montecillo ended up rejecting the school for being ‘too radical’ in their pedagogical approach. Many parents feared that, given the lack of clear structures, as well as the unorthodox teaching methods, the innovative way of providing assessments, and the lack of strict goal setting, their children would not receive a proper education and would fall back compared to other children. According to the former mayor of Tiquipaya, Saúl Cruz Pardo, who was one of the leaders of the agrarian trade union of Montecillo in 1996 and helped the school install itself in the community, this led to many community members taking their students out of the school.

La comunidad empezó a sacar a sus hijos de allá y quedaban personas que de alguna forma creían en el modelo educativo. [...] El tema de hacer [que] el mismo niño empiece a definir en qué horario va hacer lectura, en qué horario va hacer escritura, en qué año va hacer lenguaje, ciencias naturales, las matemáticas [...], la comunidad no veía muy bien ese tema. [...] Quedaba muy reducido con otras unidades educativas [...] Y esto ha hecho también que, con la comunidad y otros dirigentes [...], empezaron a exigir que se pueda

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<sup>90</sup> “It was very interesting you see, we were all a group of people with a long and radical political history.” (My translation) Interview with EF, 15.01.2014.

transformar y poder entrar otra vez en la dinámica que se tenía en la educación normal.<sup>91</sup>

Furthermore, these tensions showed that the school administration found it difficult to communicate and respond to the local communities' expectations and ways of living. The failure of *La Floresta* to convince the population of its innovative pedagogical framework shows how difficult it is to bring about change and challenge dominant structures and institutions such as the schools. *La Floresta* failed because of its inability to make its pedagogical innovations relevant to the lived experiences of the local population; it remained external to the community it wanted to be part of. As Bustamante-Morales' (2005) work clearly shows, the question of diversity and intercultural relations is a complex issue that cannot be reduced to questions inside the classroom, but rather it reflects upon the entire society. In many ways, even though the school put a lot of effort into tackling the intercultural debate within the classroom, they failed to create a space of intercultural dialogue within the community of Montecillo.

Despite its insufficiencies that led ultimately to its demise, it is after the school moved to Montecillo between 1997 and 2000 that the school went through its best years with sufficient funding to implement different projects, providing the children with a variety of different opportunities, field trips and importantly for the *Kurmi*, with an infrastructure where they were free to explore and gather experiences within the world of music. As one former student recalled:

Me acuerdo eso, y íbamos a todo lugar, primeros viernes a tocar contratos por aquí. Hemos viajado al interior del país, Santa Cruz, y gracias a la música hemos ido por todo lado, digamos ¿no?<sup>92</sup>

Over these three years the school provided the group with economic resources not only to go and play music at different festivals and events across the valley of Cochabamba, but also created incentives through multiple field trips around Bolivia

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<sup>91</sup> The community began to take their children out from there, and only those people remained who in some way or another believed in the educational model. [...] The community did not really see that the child would define when she would read, at what time she would learn to write, in which year take languages, natural sciences, mathematics. The school had small results in comparison with other educational units [...] And that also led to the community with other trade union leaders [...] beginning to demand change and to return to a dynamic which is usual in normal schools. (My translation) Interview with Saúl Cruz Pardo, 13.02.2014.

<sup>92</sup> I remember that, we went everywhere, we played for contracts on the first Fridays. We travelled within the country, to Santa Cruz, and thanks to the music we were able, let's say, to travel around, right? (My translation) JAC in interview with FF, RP, JAC. 18.11.13.

and regular research projects into different areas of social life. The students were incentivised to engage with the culture, politics and economic situation within Bolivian society.

All these activities allowed the members of the group to interact and get to know the different groups and tendencies that existed at the time within the autochthonous music scene of Cochabamba and within Bolivian society more broadly. As many interviewees affirmed, these early opportunities and contacts were crucial for the groups' survival after the school closed its doors in Montecillo in 2001, due to tensions with the local population and a loss of funding, and finally moved to Apote. There, under the name of *Kusikuna Comunidad Ecoactiva*, the school is still functioning, albeit with a much smaller scope.

Despite its collapse after a little more than four years, the school was a major factor in the formation of the group, and it provided them with a different starting point to many other groups who emerged out of neighbourhood initiatives and the universities. The clearly demarcated political orientation of the school, and its alternative pedagogical approach, were important in providing the group with a critical foundation to engage with the music. The school's curriculum and the environment created within the classroom seems to have helped the children overcome deeply rooted social stigmas and denigrations of Andean and Amazonian indigenous cultures and peoples. Even though the school was essential for the formation of the group, it was only there during the formative years of the *Kurmi* and disappeared in 2001, forcing the members to reinvent themselves as an autonomous group. As the school closed between 2000 and 2001, the students, with the support of some staff members, managed to continue organising themselves under the name of *Encuentro Cultural Kurmi* as an independent not-for-profit organisation. And for the last seventeen years they have had an active and recognised presence within Tiquipaya, but also in the wider context of Cochabamba, for instance, as we will see, helping to set up the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*, the umbrella organisation of urban autochthonous musicians in Cochabamba in 2012.

### **3.3. Becoming an urban autochthonous music group**

Their first performance at the patron saint festival back in 1996 remains, I believe, an interesting and important moment, as it encapsulates a number of different points

of contention, conflict and contradiction the *Kurmi* and other groups have to deal with throughout their existence. The practice of Andean autochthonous instruments was rare within the valley of Cochabamba and even more so in the schools, as opposed to the Andean highland region where wind instruments such as the *pinkillu* or the *siku* remained part of urban popular culture. In the valleys of Cochabamba, on the other hand, the discourse of an advanced process of '*mestizaje*' relegated these instruments to the indigenous communities from the surrounding Andean highlands. Cochabamba in this imagery was depicted as a space where a 'progressive' '*mestizaje*' took place. (see Chapter 4)

The result of these processes of othering were to create a distinction between the rural population in the valley and the rural population in the Andean highlands. Fostering the idea of a 'weak' native identity in the valleys of Cochabamba that easily gave way to colonial influence and modernity, its peasants were seen as westernised, with no distinct 'indigenous' identity of their own, by the twentieth century (Albó 1987a, 410-412).<sup>95</sup> The valley of Cochabamba was seen as the result of a mix created through waves of migration and colonisation, where the Indigenous/Andean was mixed with the creole/colonial into new society, a '*mestizo*' society (see chapter 4). This often idealised *mestizo* culture would ultimately become the imaginary foundation for the new mestizo nation project of the 1952 revolution. As Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar (2011, 32-33) show, since the late nineteenth century the governing elites in Cochabamba were pushing a modernising discourse that identified popular and indigenous looking practices as backward and dangerous; they had to be contained and pushed out of the city. In this sense, autochthonous music was looked down upon as a remnant of the past, something to be overcome or improved.

As we shall discuss in more detail in the following chapters, these practices and discourse of othering drew a line based upon a number of cultural and linguistic distinctions, contrasting different cultural and in this case musical practices. Wind instruments and the communal ways of practicing them in big ensembles were

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<sup>95</sup> This idea is most prominently argued by River Cusicanqui (2010b, 1986), Albó (1987a), Albó and Barnadas (1985) see also Dandler and Torrico (1987). Authors like Larson (1998) and in similar manner the work by Ari-Chachaki (2014) have further complicates this narrative showing how complex and intertwined relations between communities of the Andean highlands and the valleys of Cochabamba were. The question of how identities got to be constituted in Cochabamba and the Andean highlands will be discussed to in more detail in chapters three and four.

framed as exotic practices that ‘belonged’ to communities ‘far away’ in the Andean highlands. The music of the valleys of Cochabamba and places such as Tiquipaya was seen, and continues to be seen, to be constituted by string instruments such as the guitar, the *charango*, the accordion and the *bombo* played either solo, or in groups of up to six musicians.

In this sense, I suggest that the *Kurmi*, from their very first participation at the patron saint festival, have been challenging dominant discourses and representations of Indigeneity, *mestizaje* and how the *Tiquipayaño* comes to see him and herself within the wider Bolivian context. Their explicit embrace and nurturing of different cultural, ritual traditions and indigenous symbols challenges dominant discourses and practices that aimed at distancing and containing Indigeneity as something from far away, as a remnant of a premodern moment. The performance by the *Kurmi*, in other words, confronted the spectators with a cultural tradition that was and continues to be marginalised and presented as an exotic rural practice of the Andean highlands and the valleys of *Norte Potosí*, supposedly distant to the reality of a modern Tiquipaya. In this sense, one of the objectives was to build a new society. As a founding member and long-time leader of the *Kurmi* recalled

Queremos construir una nueva sociedad, justamente algo diferente también. [...] Entonces, nunca nos hemos alejado de estos procesos que está viviendo la sociedad desde esos años hasta ahora ¿no? Más bien, hemos sido bien parte [dice entre risas]. O sea, creo que gracias a nosotros ha ganado el Evo también ¿no?<sup>94</sup>

The *Kurmi* saw their activities as part of what is often referred to as a process of social, political and cultural change in Bolivia from the 1990s onward; a process that saw the rise of the Indigenous movement, and was keenly vindicating and valorising Indigenous peoples and cultures, Bolivian politics and society. The practice of autochthonous music in this context was seen as a practice of resistance against those forces that continue to look down upon indigenous cultures and lives as something that, at best, is from the past and has to be ‘overcome.’

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<sup>94</sup> We want to build a new society, precisely something that is different. [...] We have not distanced ourselves from the different processes that have been taking shape since those days up to the present. Rather we were very much part of them. [Laughing he added] That is, Evo also won thanks to us, right? (My translation) FF in interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.2013.

Muchas veces, de verdad, hemos participado políticamente igual, fuerte, cada uno con lo que sabe y también como colectividad de músicos de pueblo, digamos. Todos los que somos aquí, hemos sido una herramienta bien importante para todo este proceso que ha pasado ¿no? En las marchas, en la Guerra del Agua, en la Guerra del Gas y montón de cosas ¿no? Justamente, también nuestro instrumento ha sido fusil en algún momento. Y es nuestra forma de expresar también las cosas que estaban pasando con la cuestión indígena.<sup>95</sup>

As the quote by the long-time leader of the Kurmi clearly shows, to play music for him was part of their contribution to the wider processes of change that Bolivia was going through in the early 2000s. Moreover, music not only provided them with a means through which they could express themselves to the rest of society. The performances of the *Kurmi* was an effort to vindicate autochthonous music as a relevant cultural practice that is a vibrant part of Bolivian society. In doing so, they contributed to familiarising these cultural practices and bringing them closer to the lived experiences of the local population, opening up spaces where a different narrative and a different perspective can emerge. As the *Kurmi* (2014) in a pamphlet describe:

Promovemos retornar al equilibrio, mediante la música andina comunitaria que más que una expresión es nuestra forma de vida que nos mantiene en un constante diálogo con nuestro entorno, la familia, ayllu y la pacha. Y más allá de la música, revalorizamos la cultura[.]<sup>96</sup>

In this sense, the aim of the activities and performances was to subvert discourses that continue to depict Autochthonous music (and with it Indigenous cultures) as something from the past and backward, or as something other people did in other places. In this sense, the *Kurmi* were engaged in a fight for recognition and the

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<sup>95</sup> Seriously, we also participated strongly on a political level, everyone contributed with what they knew but we also participated as a collective of musicians of the people. All of us who are here, we were important tools for this entire process that has passed right? In the marches, the Water War, the Gas Wars and many other things right? Precisely at some point our instrument was also a rifle. It was also our way to express what was going on with the 'indigenous question.' (My translation) FF in interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.2013.

<sup>96</sup> We promote the return to equilibrium through the practice of communitarian Andean music, which is more than just an expression; it is a way of life that keeps us in constant dialogue with our surroundings, the family, the ayllu and the pacha. And beyond the music we re-value the culture[.] (My translation)



valorisation of Indigenous people and cultures within Tiquipaya and the broader Cochabamba. The former mayor of Tiquipaya, Saúl Cruz Pardo, analysing the impact of the cultural activities of the *Kurmi*, drew particular attention to their efforts to valorise Indigenous practices within the community. According to him, their activities particularly helped in Montecillo to revive communitarian practices and ways of thinking that were disappearing due to an encroaching modernising, developmentalist and neoliberal mind-set that was taking hold of the Agrarian Trade Union of Montecillo.

El Kurmi ha generado todo un movimiento de poder hacer, que la música debe de ser parte de la vivencia y parte de lo que puede ser una actividad económica productiva. [...] Y ellos han empezado siempre a estar en actividades donde tiene que ver mucho con la productividad de la tierra.<sup>97</sup>

The former mayor thus shifts the impact of *Kurmi* away from a politics of recognition; rather, he highlights how the activities and performances of the *Kurmi* helped reactivate and connect the cultural and festive with the economic productivity of the region. I was able to attend two such events; the first was on 29<sup>th</sup> of November 2013, and the other at a different event on 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2014 (see Figures 9 and 10). On both occasions the *Kurmi* participated not only as guest musicians but were very much part of the community activity that preceded the communal labour activities, combining communal work with the practice of music. In this sense, Saúl Cruz Pardo continues explaining that for him, the work of the *Kurmi* helped bring to the foreground the communitarian aspects at the heart of the work done in the agrarian trade union of Montecillo and beyond.

Pero además [enfaticaron] el encuentro entre la tierra y el hombre, la tierra y la persona. [...] Esto hace de que sí [ciertamente], el *Kurmi* ha estado cultivando esta temática de lo que puede hacer la vida comunitaria. Y la vida comunitaria, sin duda, es un tema de vivencias mas interrelacionados entre personas, entre familias. Que no es muy sencillo porque en algún momento entra mucho el tema de lo que le

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<sup>97</sup> The Kurmi have generated an entire movement introducing music as an element of the lived experience and part of the productive economic activity. [...] They started to participate in activities that are related to the productivity of the earth. (My translation) Interview with Saúl Cruz Pardo, 13.02.2014.

interesa a la persona. Es un ¿cómo está? En qué posición está? Pero es este tema de poder compartir con otras personas de la actividad productiva, [mostrando] que les pueda generar cierta economía, [y que la vida comunitaria] pueda también de alguna forma ser parte de la vivencia.<sup>98</sup>

The former mayor makes an important connection, showing that to nurture Indigenous cultural and ritual practices can help foster communal ties and can help consolidate more communal economic practices. Thus Saúl Cruz Pardo shows how the need to challenge ideas of otherness and exoticization of Indigenous peoples cannot be reduced to an attempt to work towards a more open and tolerant society. In other words, it is not enough to recognise the Other, the Indigenous for who she or he is, the task is also to be able to revalorise and nourish communal practices that are already present within Tiquipaya. For him it was clear that by challenging the stereotypical narratives about Indigeneity helped to promote and valorise different social practices that were already present within society but that are often looked down upon because they stand at odds with colonial modernity's narrative about what a 'successful' life looks like. Saúl Cruz thus concludes that it is not enough to just speak about music one also has to speak of what music enables the Kurmi to do.

[La] música es importante en la vivencia comunitaria, en la generación de productividad que pueda tener en las comunidades. Pero también estamos viendo que el Kurmi está intentando de generar espacios donde puedan dialogar y puedan construir y aportar mucho más en este tema de poder hacer que se tenga una vivencia más comunitaria y una economía comunitaria.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Furthermore [they emphasized] the encounter between the earth and humans, between the earth and the person. [...] In that sense, yes, the Kurmi have been cultivating the subject matter of what a communitarian life can do. And communitarian life without a doubt goes together with people, families being more interrelated, which is not very easy because at some point personal interest, and the well-being of each one, as well as personal status, comes into question. But this is precisely why to be able to share the productive activities with other people [shows] that it is possible to generate an economy, [showing] that [a communitarian life] can also be part of the lived experience. (My translation) Interview with Saúl Cruz Pardo, 13.02.2014.

<sup>99</sup> Music is important for a communitarian lived experience, it is important in generating productivity that a community can have. We are also seeing that the Kurmi are trying to create spaces of dialogue, where they can build and contribute more in order to create a more communitarian experience and communitarian economy. (My translation) Interview with Saúl Cruz Pardo, 13.02.2014.

The practice of autochthonous music here cannot just be discussed in terms of cultural recognition of Indigenous peoples. Rather as Saúl Cruz argues one also has to talk about the spaces of dialogue and the communal experiences the *Kurmi* are able to nurture through the practice of autochthonous music. Expanding on Saúl Cruz Pardo's observations, we can see how challenging particular representations of Indigeneity through performances of autochthonous music in urban as well as rural spaces can help revitalise social, economic and communal practices that are embedded in worlding processes other to modernity.

From the very first performance during the patron saint's festival of San Miguel we can see the complex and complicated relations groups like the *Kurmi* are confronted with. Their performances are engaging with competing narratives of legitimacy, authenticity, cooptation and distortion. Their activities are being played out within often competing worlding processes. This first appearance in Tiquipaya of the *Kurmi* in 1996 at the *Fiesta de San Miguel* is a good example in many ways, as it clearly shows some of the core issues at stake during autochthonous musical performances in urban areas that we will be addressing in following chapters. Their first performance has to be understood within this particular context. As mentioned earlier, by choosing Andean autochthonous music, as well as the use of the *wiphala*, their performance challenged dominant ideas of indigeneity within the village of Tiquipaya in the 1990s. And yet in many ways, the *Kurmi* also took part in the reproduction of common and stereotypical ideas of Indigeneity. As a member of the group, reflecting critically back to their first appearance recounted:

Porque no se sabía bien qué se estaba haciendo. La gente de Pусisuyu –tenemos las fotos ahí– ellos no entran así. Entran así vestidos normal. Nosotros entramos disfrazados de Norte Potosinos y ahí es el inicio, ahí es donde comienza. Porque la música, los instrumentos se van a quedar. Y nosotros vamos a empezar a caminar detrás de estos grupos [Pусisuyu, C.I.C.A. Ayllu].<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> “We did not really know what we were doing. The members of Pусisuyu—we have the photos—they entered with normal clothes. We entered disguised as people from the north of Potosí, that was our beginning, there is where it started. The music and the instruments stayed. And we will start to walk behind these groups [Pусisuyu, C.I.C.A. Ayllu]” (My translation) RP in interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.2013.

Roberto Miguel Paniagua was one of the first students to be enrolled in *La Floresta* school in 1996. And went on to study Architecture at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón. In 2013 he was one of the leaders of the *Kurmi*.

The mixing of two distinct cultures in their performance is a good example of how urban groups and in this case the instructors of the *Floresta* school failed to take the complexity and diversity of Indigenous cultures and peoples in the Andes seriously, thus reflecting how Indigeneity was often viewed (and often continues to be viewed) as a monolithic block within urban and semi-urban communities, a view that erases the diversities and specificities among indigenous cultures.

While on the one hand, within the particular context of Tiquipaya, their appearance was a powerful intervention that has helped revitalise communitarian practices, at the same time their performance ignored and brushed over the particularities and differences between different Andean cultures and peoples, mixing the clothes and the music from two cultures. This example showcases the limitations and problems inherent to the practice of Andean autochthonous music by urban musicians, be it first, second or third generation migrants or by groups with such diverse backgrounds as the *Kurmi*. I argue that the performances of the *Kurmi* have to be understood as being embedded within the political, social and economic context of its members; they are informed by the dominant discourses and depictions of what indigeneity means and looks like. As such they also risk reproducing old colonial depictions and stereotypes. This raises the question of what it entails to accurately represent and perform the Andean autochthonous music. Where does the boundary lie between performances that co-opt and distort autochthonous music? And also who or what are they performing for? What are the motivations driving the performance? What can music do? What stayed with the children who played on after that first performance of the *Kurmi* were not the costumes; rather it was the music, the instruments and the experience of performing the *tarkas*. In order to better understand the particularities and challenges the *Kurmi* posed, with their specific history of diversity, their relations with Tiquipaya and the alternative school project of *La Floresta*, we have to look at the context within which they were operating. Doing so can provide us with an interesting opening in order to further explore the implications of these questions.



Figure 9: Members of the community of Montecillo gathering together on February 9, 2014, to celebrate the delivery of tractors by local authorities. Photo taken by the author.



Figure 10: In the front of the picture mayor Saúl Cruz Pardo is looking at the members of the *Kurmi* playing *sikus*. Picture taken by the author on February 9, 2014.

### 3.4. Urban autochthonous music and the rearticulation of the Indigenous movement

At the turn of the millennium a new generation of urban autochthonous groups were being formed; groups like the *Wilanchas*, composed mostly of engineering students of the UMSS (Universidad Mayor de San Simon) of Cochabamba, and the *Ayllu Ñan Amayumpi* (*Ayllu Ñan*, Path to the Ayllu), rooted in the southern outskirts of the city, were starting to make themselves heard across the valleys of Cochabamba. These groups represent another type of diversity. Organised among engineering students or around a particular neighbourhood as is the case with *Ayllu Ñan* or also the group *AMA* (*Agrupación Musical Autóctona*, Autochthonous Music Group) brought together people from different parts of the Bolivian highlands. These groups are generally composed of first or second generation migrants from the Andean highlands. For these groups, music and autochthonous music was often seen as a means of maintaining a connection with their roots and their identities as Quechua or Aymara. A striking example is the recently founded group *21 de Junio*,<sup>101</sup> whose members come from Northern Potosí, Oruro, and La Paz. As a member of the group who had migrated about 25 years ago to Cochabamba from the North of Potosí explained to me:

Somos del grupo 21 de Junio quizás por el amor a la música ¿no?  
Porque nosotros sentimos [parte] de nuestros pueblos, que es de  
donde hemos venido, sentimos la música por nuestros abuelos,  
nuestros tatarabuelos, ya, etc, etc. Ya, es por eso que compongo a este  
grupo 21 de Junio.<sup>102</sup>

Another member of the group who migrated from Oruro to live in Cochabamba explained that he plays autochthonous music as a means through maintain and present his Andean roots.

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<sup>101</sup> The group *21 de Junio* stands out among the member groups of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. Not only is it one of the newest groups, but also its members are much older compared to the *Kurmi* for instance. Also they perform in a part of the city of Cochabamba south of the Laguna Alalay that is marked through the multiple waves of internal migration. As such the goal behind of their performances is less centered around the necessity to open up spaces, but rather seems to be more connected to efforts to valorise and celebrate their Andean traditions.

<sup>102</sup> We are from the group 21 de Junio, perhaps out of love of music right? Because we feel, [part] of the peoples from where we come from, we feel the music, because our grandparents, our great grandparents etc., etc. That is why I am part of the group 21 de Junio. (My translation) Member of 21 de Junio, group interview 29.03.2014.

Y respecto a la música, yo creo que todos que vivimos en los Andes tenemos descendencia [he probably means 'ascendencia'] de nuestros abuelos que han sido siempre andinos y lo llevamos, creo, en la sangre ¿no? Por eso es que la música autóctona, la música andina autóctona nos enerva [the use of the word 'enervar' hear is closer to meaning vitalise, energize, rather than irritate or enervate] el alma. Por eso que lo hacemos y los seguimos difundiendo. A través de los tiempos, de las generaciones, seguimos difundiendo y espero también nuestros hijos sigan. Esperamos siempre eso para que nuestra cultura no se pierda ¿no? Eso sería todo lo que puedo decirles. Que viva siempre la cultura andina, la cultura de Bolivia!<sup>103</sup>

Autochthonous music is seen by these two as the means through which cultural continuity is expressed and maintained. In other words, it is through the performance of autochthonous music that these migrants are articulating and performing their sense of self and belonging. The use of music as a means to articulate one's own identity goes beyond Cochabamba. Similar claims were also made in my interaction with autochthonous musicians in La Paz. Furthermore Turino (1992, 1993, 2008b) in his research of musical practices among Andean highland migrant communities in Lima, shows in great detail how the practice and performances of autochthonous music became sites where these migrant communities were able to reaffirm and revalorise a particular Andean identity within the urban context of Lima. Alvaro Vega (2002) and Fernando Barragán Sandi (2002) make similar observation in their short explorations of urban autochthonous groups in La Paz. They show how the practice of autochthonous music served to show the cultural continuity of migrants, and their capacity to maintain good relations with the rural areas through the festive system. Music, thus, is used to reinforce claims of continuity, in contexts where historically claims to rural or indigenous backgrounds were looked down upon. Vega (2002, 322) goes a step further, arguing that the practice of autochthonous music

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<sup>103</sup> When it comes to music, I believe that everyone who lives in the Andes, are descendants of our grandparents, who have always been Andeans and I believe we carry it in our blood, right? That is why autochthonous music, the autochthonous music of the Andes touches our souls. That is why we make it, and continue to diffuse it. Over the ages, over the generations we continue to spread it and hope as well that our children will follow. We always hope this so that our culture won't get lost, right? That is all I can say. May the Andean culture, the Bolivian culture live forever! (My translation) Member of 21 de Junio, group interview 29.03.2014.

helped the urban groups to better understand the symbolic code in their rural communities of origin. In my fieldwork I was able to witness similar discourses. Many musicians who are second or third generation migrants found, through the practices of autochthonous music, a way of reconnecting with their Aymara and Quechua roots/worlds. A member of *Ayllu Ñan* described this process in the following manner:

En un principio han empezado a hacer música, por ejemplo, han empezado a tocar sikus, después tarkas, después poco a poco hablando con sus abuelos, seguramente los que todavía tienen sus abuelos [y], viajando, conociendo las comunidades de donde vienen esos instrumentos, escuchándoles a ellos [los abuelos], han ido aprendiendo.<sup>104</sup>

Music he suggest thus became for the members a vehicle through which knowledge could be transmitted from one generation to the next, despite the changing socio-economic context brought by migration and urban life styles. But music did not just help to (re)connect them with their parents and grandparents, or with their rural communities. The interactions through music, he maintains, taught many about the different cycles, both agricultural and ritual, that guide rural agricultural life.

Y han ido escuchando, por ejemplo, de que la tarka se toca en un tiempo determinado y no se toca todo el año, [...] poco a poco [...] iban aprendiendo o recordando [...] más pistas, más pautas, pues. [...] Descubriendo por ejemplo las relaciones que tienen los instrumentos con el ciclo agrícola. [...] A partir de la música, de los instrumentos, han ido reconociendo esa carga a la que me refería, parte de la cosmovisión andina, parte de todo eso. O sea, es como si una parte de transmitir toda esa cosmovisión ha sido, pues, la música.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> At the beginning, they started playing the sikus for example, and the tarka, then little by little those who still had their grandparents, they started speaking with their grandparents. They travelled and got to know the communities where the instruments came from. Listening to them [the grandparents] they continued learning. (My translation) Interview with JS 18.03.2014.

Javier Enrique Soruco Ferrufino, 30 years old, was born in Cochabamba. He started studying Ingeneiring before he joined the *Ayllu Ñan* in 2009.

<sup>105</sup> And they heard for example that the tarka is played during a specific period, and is not played the entire year [...] little by little they were learning or remembering [...] more clues, more guidelines. [...] Discovering for example the relations that the instruments have with the agricultural cycle. [...] Through music, through the instruments they began recognising the baggage (also charge) I was referring to earlier, that is part of the Andean cosmology, part of all that. It is as if music was a way of transmitting all that cosmology. (My translation) Interview JS 18.03.2014.



For him it is clear that these interactions also helped recognise the relations between music and the different Andean cosmologies. Besides providing a platform to engage with the different Andean religious and ritual practices, the practice of music also made palpable the discrimination and the disdain the different Indigenous cultures and peoples are confronted. The following testimony of a founding member of *Wilancha* shows this in great detail. Autochthonous music he asserted helped him understand how urban life was part of a larger process of alienation and distancing of rural and Indigenous cultural and social practices. He affirms that it was music that guided him to engage with questions of colonisation.

Entonces, [...] me empiezan a llamar la atención esos instrumentos [...] Al principio sólo como, digamos, algo melodioso, atrayente, como [que] sólo me gustaba la música y todo eso era interesante. Pero, luego de eso, se empieza a consolidar todo eso, empiezo a ver que todas esas melodías habían tenido todo una historia bien fuerte hacia atrás ¿no? [...] O sea, cada vez, digamos, que se toca o escucho es como una guerra ganada, digamos. Que tantos años han pasado, digamos, 500 años atrás o más años, y aún así [la música] se siguen interpretando de la misma forma, digamos, de su misma esencia.<sup>106</sup>

For many it seems it was the music that helped them recognise the mechanism and structures in school, university as well as the military through which they were distanced or alienated from the lived experiences of their parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts. And as this quote shows, the practice of music also connected him with the anti-colonial political and social struggle. To play music for him means to go against modernising discourses and practices that have been predicting the demise even the disappearance of different Indigenous cultures and peoples. To be able to play, becomes a victory, an affirmation that these cultures and people are still alive and thriving. He further argued that it was after this recognition that he

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<sup>106</sup> So those instruments start calling my attention. At the beginning only as something melodically attractive, because I only liked the music, and it was all interesting. But after that, everything begins to consolidate, and I start to see that all the melodies had a very strong history right? That is, each time one plays, each time I hear it is like a war won, let's say. So many years have passed, 500 or more years and even so [this music] continues to be interpreted the same way, let's say, with the same essence. (My translation) Interview with JoA, 11.04.2014.

Joge Ayala as a student of Civil Ingeniering at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón founded in the early 2000 together with some friends the *Comunidad Wilancha*. Currently he is a member of *Comunidad Urbana Satasiñani*. In 2013-2014 he was one of the four members of the directive of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*.

he empezado a respetarlo, a admirar, y de ahí empezó, digamos, todo lo que se ha volteado ¿no? Todo lo que antes pensaba de otras cosas, entonces me ha empezado a fascinar más que... o sea, que toda la cultura. o sea, a través de la música empiezo a comprender toda una..., todo lo que venía por atrás, toda una sabiduría ancestral que, no por algo, digamos, no se ha destrozado como otras cosas ¿no?<sup>107</sup>

Autochthonous music was and still is as a companion, a teacher, a guide, something that not only helped him through hard times, but also provided him with an insight into another life, a different way of being and knowing the world. A world that seemed unreachable and was made invisible by colonial modernity, the school and other social institutions. The practice of autochthonous music in this case appears as more than an artistic or aesthetic activity, rather it is an important thread allowing the musicians and dancers to connect and relate themselves to a part of their cultural, social, political and historic traditions that are generally denigrated and oppressed within colonial modernity.

But as we have seen in the quotes above, these connections are often expressed in terms of blood or in allusion to kinship ties. Music not only functions as an enabler, a medium through which blood or kinship ties are made relevant and valuable as identity markers, but it also highlights how notions of blood and kinship are woven within Indigenous political struggle. It highlights how it is used among urban autochthonous groups as a discursive mechanism to claim continuity, authenticity and social capital. However, the autochthonous music cannot be reduced to claims of kinship and cultural belonging it also binds urban autochthonous groups and the Indigenous political and social struggles.

This perhaps becomes clearer if we go back to reconsider example of the *Kurmi*, since their particular origins raise a number of important issues and challenges in this regard. The *Kurmi* are among the few groups in Cochabamba and probably in Bolivia who brought together people not just from across Bolivia but also from different countries around the world. As such they could rarely rely on these claims to 'blood'

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<sup>107</sup> I started to respect it, to admire it, and it is there, let's say, that everything turned, right? Everything I thought previously, so it began to fascinate me more... that is, that the entire culture, that is, through music I begin to understand everything... everything that came behind, all the ancestral wisdom, that for some reason, was not destroyed like other things, right? (My translation) Interview with JoA, 11.04.2014.

or 'kinship' ties with the Andean cultures, creating dissonance and distance with other groups.

### 3.5. The *Kurmi* and question of diversity, and authenticity

The origin story of the *Kurmi* meant that from the beginning the group encompassed girls and boys from different social, economic but also national and ethnic backgrounds. This diversity has been repeatedly highlighted by both members of the group themselves as well as by members of society and other groups. In fact, the very name of the group *Encuentro Cultural Kurmi* (Cultural encounter *Kurmi*) is a direct reference to this cultural diversity. The word *Kurmi* comes from Quechua and Aymara and means rainbow. It was chosen to reflect the diversity that characterised the group, bringing people together from all colours and shapes. This diversity meant that the *Kurmi*, more than other groups, was confronted with questions of intercultural dialogue, questions of authenticity and also of co-optation. Their practice of music was not only met with positive responses, But the motivations behind their musical performances were also challenged. As the excerpt below shows, the *Kurmi* found themselves confronted within a set of seemingly contradictory positions from the beginning.

[..] había una diversidad de origen de todo lado. En esta experiencia educativa, habían alemanes, habían cumpas italianos, pero que estaban por aquí cerca. Siempre hemos sido cercanos digamos. Y la gente, otra gente miraba desde afuera con esa idea ¿no? ¿Pero si ellos están haciendo nuestra música y por qué no nosotros? ¿Si ellos tocan esto, por qué no nosotros? Entonces, y claro había otra gente que decía lo contrario ¿no? ¿Por qué, ellos, están haciendo eso?<sup>108</sup>

The *Kurmi* were an exception within the context of Cochabamba, their diverse background stood out among the other groups, in particular with regards to the other

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<sup>108</sup> there was a diversity with people coming from everywhere. In this educational experience there were Germans, there were Italian colleagues, who lived around here. We were, let's say, always close to each other. And the people, the other people they looked from the outside thinking: If they are playing our music why aren't we? If they play this, why don't we? But there were also other people who said the opposite right? Why are they doing that? (My translation) FF in interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.2013.

groups emerging around the same time. As the testimony above shows, their existence was not always met positively but was also confronted by other groups and peoples with scepticism and even rejection. There is also a different dynamic at play here that comes from the endemic and deep rooted racism and discrimination towards Indigenous peoples within Bolivian society. For many people in Cochabamba, and elsewhere in the country, the presence of foreigners of European descent among the *Kurmi* was a form of legitimisation and valorisation of Andean cultural practices. (Rios 2010) This need of external vindication of local and indigenous practices is a recurrent theme among mostly urban and mestizo circles, and is particularly manifest within music and the cultural production more broadly.<sup>109</sup>

These two seemingly contradictory positions are the result of a long colonial process that systematically discredits and portrays any cultural practices associated with the different indigenous cultures as backward and unsophisticated, while contrasting it with the 'high culture' of the mestizo of 'western' origin. These two positions, the necessity for external validation, as well as the protectivism and exclusivism along ethnic lines have to be understood as responses to particular ideas of what are desirable cultural practices, and more broadly, what kind of society people are working towards. Within the musical context these confrontations fundamentally pose the question of how we come to decide who is allowed to play what kind of music and engage other cultural and religious practices, and equally important under whose terms these reproductions are executed. In particular when it comes to understanding the performance of autochthonous music as a political intervention, as an expression of support to the Indigenous movement. The quote below by long-time leader of the *Kurmi* reflects upon this:

Y también, claro, hemos tenido esos tiempos en que no nos sentíamos muy parte de todo, del mismo movimiento indígena. Pero tampoco no nos sentíamos muy alejados de eso, porque la música que hacíamos de alguna manera reflejaba eso... era la música que tocan ellos. Y nosotros con el tiempo hemos llegado a tener ese respeto y cariño por la misma música. Porque al principio, por eso te digo, muchos de nosotros hemos empezado con esa curiosidad de niños de aprender a tocar,

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<sup>109</sup> For a more in depth discussion see Chapter 5.

simplemente aprender a tocar. Eso era, de la mayoría de nosotros, nuestro objetivo. Pero con el tiempo, se ha vuelto muy parte de la vida de cada uno y después colectivamente ¿no?<sup>110</sup>

In this testimony, music emerges again as a mechanism, a medium that binds together and relates the urban autochthonous musician to a larger political and social struggle. The quote also shows an awareness of the distance and difference that exist between the *Kurmi*, as an urban autochthonous group, and the Indigenous movement more broadly. However, it also suggests a similar argument to other testimonies presented in this chapter, regarding a change in how music is understood, moving from an understanding of music as an artistic, aesthetic activity towards a conception of autochthonous music as something more, revealing other worlds, nurturing the relations between the manifest realm and the spiritual hinterlands. The encounter with music is retold as a life changing experience, that encouraged my interview partners to engage with the Indigenous, political, social, and religious world in ways that they seem to imply otherwise would have not been accessible. The practices of autochthonous music bound them not just to a political or social struggle but as the quote above says ‘it became part of their lives.’ In other words, autochthonous music opened up the possibility of an alternative way of understanding and projecting their lives.

The groups through music discover a different way of interacting with Indigeneity and rural cultural practices. At the same time, their activities bring the rural-urban divide to the forefront of their activities. In particular dealing with questions of identity, belonging and authenticity, groups in Cochabamba are confronted by other groups of Oruro and La Paz and by inhabitants of highland rural communities with the same challenges to their right to practices Andean autochthonous music. The quote below tells of one such encounter of an urban autochthonous musician with a rural indigenous musician during the *Anata* autochthonous parade in Oruro:

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<sup>110</sup> And of course we also had those times when we didn’t feel we were part of everything, of the Indigenous movement itself. But we never felt too faraway of the movement, because the music we played in one or the other way reflected that... was the same music they played. And over time we gained that respect and affect to the same music. Because at the beginning, this is why am telling you, we started with the curiosity to learn of children, we just wanted to learn to play. That was the objective of the majority of us. But with time, it [music] has become part of the life of each one of us, and later also part of our collective life, right? (My translation) FF in interview with FF, RP, JAC, 18.11.2013.

O sea, por más que toques, siendo urbano, que toques música autóctona para él no significabas nada ¿no? [...] Y así, ¿no? De hacerle charla así, le dije: ‘nosotros tenemos un grupo allá en Cochabamba y tocamos’. [Él respondió:] de qué sirve que hagas [música], o sea, no has hecho nada por mí. O sea, la música autóctona, tú estás difundiendo eso, pero ¡qué! ¡No haces nada! O sea, mi música siempre ha estado en el pueblo, siempre se ha tocado, se sigue manteniendo’.<sup>111</sup>

It also shows that there are divisions between different groups and sectors that cannot be overlooked. Urban autochthonous groups operate within a complex web of claims of recognition and categorisation, co-optation and preservation. The lines distinguishing who is and who is not part of the indigenous population are in many ways blurry at best. As Barragan (2009) and Canessa (2007) affirm throughout their work, ethnic lines in the Bolivian highlands are highly contextual, changing depending on the positions of those navigating around these boundaries, and the relations they have in a particular setting.<sup>112</sup> The question that emerges here, is not just about where the boundaries are drawn, and who is conceived as being capable to rightfully represent and enact Andean autochthonous music, and who is just contributing to its commodification and cooptation. Urban autochthonous musicians are part of intricate power struggles for recognition, valorisation and redistribution where there is no easy or evident position or demand. Rather their claims are all situated within particular social, political and economic webs, their activities, which attempt to intervene in these spaces, are never straight forward and as such cannot be reduced to a simple story line. As the testimony further observes:

Tal vez esa molestia es porque en los discos que ves de los grupos comerciales. Ahí ponen ¿no?, música autóctona rescatada, rescate, la reivindicación y todo eso. Pero ellos [los comunarios] se ríen, digamos, ¿no?, Qué están poniendo ahí si [nosotros seguimos], ellos se ponen

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<sup>111</sup> Thus even if you played, being from an urban background, that you played autochthonous music you didn’t represent anything, right? [...] In an effort to make some small talk, I told him ‘we have a group in Cochabamba, and we play’ [but he answered] what is the use that you make [music], that is, you haven’t done anything for me, yeah sure you are diffusing autochthonous music, but that doesn’t do anything. My music has always been in my village, it has always been played, is kept alive. (My translation) Interview with JoA, 11.04.2014.

<sup>112</sup> In this regard see also the different article published in the edited volume on Indigenous and worker’s identities in the Andean highlands by Denise Arnold (2009).

como la bandera ¿no? de haber rescatado esas cosas, cuando en realidad nada se ha perdido. Porque en otras comunidades siempre se ha mantenido eso.<sup>113</sup>

This account further problematizes the picture of urban autochthonous musicians and highlights some of the questions that are at the heart of their engagement with autochthonous music: Is it enough to promote and valorise the different Indigenous cultures so that they can be recognised within broader sectors of society? What do these efforts do to improve the conditions of the communities they claim to promote and valorise? In other words, by overemphasising the politics of recognition over a politics of redistribution, urban autochthonous musicians risk to overemphasise their own role over that of the communities they claim to be promoting. As such the testimony above is a rejection of tendencies among urban musicians that like to present themselves as the ‘saviours’ of Indigenous peoples, their cultural and religious practices. The practice of autochthonous music in this sense questions the limits of an analytical framework that reduces culture, rituals and music to politics of recognition. Rather their engagement with autochthonous music and the reasoning of many urban autochthonous groups suggests to me that it is not just about a demand for more re-presentation and better inclusion within ‘modern’ Bolivian society. Rather they see the practice of autochthonous music also as a tool through which Bolivian society can be transformed, reinvented, decolonised.

In this sense, I argue that groups following the call of the Indigenous organisations is perhaps best articulated by the *Pacto de Unidad* (Pact of Unity) in 2003. The *Pacto de Unidad* is the name under which the different Indigenous movements and organisations came together to push for the Constituent Assembly in the wake of the collapse of the neoliberal government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in 2002. The document was significant as its demands and proposals for social and political change, provided a credible alternative to the neoliberal project. Furthermore this alliance of Indigenous movements consolidated their position within the political landscape as the most influential social movement. In the document they challenged society to go beyond itself and work towards a true decolonisation, emphasising the

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<sup>113</sup> Perhaps this irritation comes from the discs that you find from the commercial groups. They write things like ‘autochthonous music saved’, ‘rescue the vindications’ and all that. But they [rural indigenous inhabitant] laugh right? ‘What are they writing there if [we are still here], and they pretend to have saved these things, when in reality nothing has been lost. Because in other communities these things have been kept alive. (My translation) Interview with JoA, 11.04.2014.

necessity to reinvent the state, its economic foundations and all of society. (Romero Bonifaz 2005, 243-299) Underlying this project is the recognition that inclusion, acceptance and recognition of the Indigenous peoples and their culture will not change the institutionalised mechanisms of exclusion and exploitation. With the declaration published on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May of 2003 the Indigenous organisation aim was not one of identity politics but rather they claim it was to lead the way in the reinvention of Bolivian society based on their experiences and ways of being and knowing (Romero Bonifaz 2005, 713-715, Garcés 2010).

The shifting national, political and social context of the early 2000, also changed the relations between the different urban autochthonous groups. The first decade of the new millennium saw a gradual coming together between the groups. Many of them aligned behind the growing indigenous demands. Furthermore, from many personal conversations it became clear that the celebrations of the first Fridays of the month with a *q'uwa* and the celebration of the now famous *Inti Watana* (the Andean new year on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June) had become sites where the different groups were able to come together, create bonds and nourishing relations of *ayni* and exchange between each other, and in doing so they were able to help each other out.

The work of the groups gains an entire new meaning within this context. The downfall of the neoliberal government was perceived as the beginning of the end of the old colonial paradigms of control and governance. The question then became one of how can these changes be achieved, and what exactly does the challenge set by the Indigenous organisations entail for society and in particular for a fast-growing urban population? How do you go about healing from more than five hundred years of structural and systematised exploitation, oppression and marginalisation? The indigenous movement had over the years developed the call to rethink and reorient the path that colonialism and capitalism had put Bolivia on, and rather to base a new political and economic project on the lived experience of the different indigenous peoples, their cultures, their philosophy and religious practices.

The work of revitalisation and promotion of Andean music led many to an engagement with the different ways of being of the Andes and the religious, spiritual practices of the different communities. It is precisely this experience that demarcates urban autochthonous groups from other urban social movements. A founding member of the *Kurmi* in this sense argues that “sabemos que podemos aportar con nuestra experiencia, la que hemos vivido [es] diferente a [la] muchas personas o a



[la de] muchos grupos o movimientos ¿no?”<sup>114</sup> Music here is understood to bridge access to lived experience that otherwise remains outside of the reach of many urban dwellers given the systematic and institutional denigration of the Indigenous peoples’ ways of being and knowing. In other words, Andean music provides in many ways access to an ‘other-wise’ from where urban musicians attempt to project a different trajectory for themselves and society. In this sense, the groups engagement with autochthonous music and the ritual and spiritual revitalisation of Andean practices has the potential to engage with the challenges and demands of the different Indigenous movements, in a way that allows us to step aside from questions of recognition, and thus challenge questions of representation that limit the realm of the possible within Bolivian politics. Focusing instead on the necessity to bringing about a fundamental transformation of society, the economy and politics that not only revalorises Andean and Amazonian social and cultural practices, but that creates the conditions where they can live and thrive. This is ultimately a focus of social intervention that is aimed at changing the direction away from a western-centric and westernising social project that was being imposed throughout the colonial and republican era. The last section further explores the idea of music as a worlding practice. In particular it focuses what to nurture music means among the different urban autochthonous groups.

### 3.6. Learning to nurture music

The autochthonous groups’ influence also became more visible within the changing contexts of the cities. Groups such as the *Taller de Proyección Cultural* of the *Universidad Mayor de San Andrés* from La Paz were frustrated with the limited and biased literature on Andean communities, their religious, political, social and cultural practices in general and Andean musical practices more specifically. They set out in the early 1990s to document and systematise the different religious, cultural and social practices across the Andes in an active effort to counter narratives that depicted Indigenous cultures, their religious, agricultural and musical practices as backward

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<sup>114</sup> “we know what we can contribute with our lived experience, [since] it is different to the ones of many people or of many groups or movements, right?” (My translation) Interview with FF, 11.03.2014.

or simplistic. An early member who at the time was studying architecture recounted the process they went through and how their travels and research changed their perspectives on Bolivia and autochthonous music in particular:

Pero cuando uno ve en el campo hacer esas expresiones [musicales], no parece eso [simple, aburrido, atrasado], pues. Al margen de que pueda parecer de que la música es básica y simplona, no es así. Entonces, justamente del proceso de investigar y de compartir y demás cosas, nos hemos ido dando cuenta de que no es así. Es más profundo, tiene su explicación, digamos, ¿no? Obviamente, a las conclusiones que hemos llegado tampoco es, pues, lo absoluto ¿no? [...] Porque nosotros estamos desde el 91 con esta cuestión. Antes del 'proceso de cambio' [XM: antes de todo], antes que se esté trabajando en eso, o sea, mucho antes ¿no? Y nada, entonces nos hemos llegado a interiorizar bastante en eso. Y lo hemos querido fundamentalmente mostrar, pues. Porque Bolivia es folklórico digamos. Pero un otro tipo de folklore es el que se muestra ¿no ve? [Uno es de] Diabladas, Morenadas, y demás, pero en el otro lado tenemos un campo desconocido en esas épocas, o sea, otro tipo de danzas pero con otros conceptos. O sea, no es solo visual, no es solo bailar ¿no ve? Tiene conceptos rituales, todo es ritual. Entonces, era la idea de mostrar también eso. De mostrar, de interiorizar, no sé, toda la vivencia que tienen en el campo, y demás.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> "But when one goes to the country side, and sees those [musical] expressions they do not appear to be that [simple, boring, backward]. Regardless that the music might seem to be basic or simplistic, it isn't like that. It is precisely out of the research process and the sharing a long side other things that we started to realise that it wasn't like that. It is more profound, it has its own explanations let's say, right? But obviously the conclusions we reached are not absolute right? [...] Because we're since 91 [working] on this matter. Before the 'process of change,' before that has been woven, way before right? And nothing then, we managed to internalise a lot of that. And we mainly wanted to show that. Because Bolivia is folkloric let's say. But it is another type of folklore that is shown right? [One of] Diabladas, Morenadas and other. But on the other hand we have a country side, unknown in those days, that has other types of dances, with other concepts. That is, it isn't just visual, it isn't just [about] dancing right? It has ritual concepts, everything is ritual. In that sense, the idea was to also show that. To show, to internalise, I don't know, all the experiences they have in the country side, and more. (My translation) DO in interview with XM, 02.4.14.

David Ordeñas Ferrer, in his 40s, is an architect and urban autochthonous musician of the city of La Paz. He joined the *Taller de Proyección Cultural* of the *Universidad Mayor de San Andrés* during his studies at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés in La Paz in the 1990s.

This excerpt shows clearly the preoccupation of the group to counter hegemonic and state led narratives over how Bolivian folklore looks and sounds like by contrasting it to the different lived experiences of Andean communities and their cultural and religious practices. But their in-depth and sustained engagement with this other Bolivia, also revealed something more, another world so to speak:

Y al margen de toda esta cuestión, nos ha servido a nosotros para entender a los pueblos en cierto sentido, y nada, a acostumbrarnos, puede ser? Porque ahora, en nuestros trabajos es otra cosa ¿no? O sea, cuando vamos al campo, cuando vemos, tenemos que realizar algunas actividades ahí, creo que no hay mucho problema, porque interiorizamos, compartimos. O sea, para eso también ha servido. O sea, es una... cómo sería la palabra? [Piensa un momento] Nos ha servido para la vida en realidad. No ha sido solamente música.<sup>116</sup>

Over the years they realised that the practice of autochthonous music does not just stop with accurate and faithful reproduction of the different music styles and instruments. Music in many ways created a bridge for my urban interlocutors and the Andean world, its cultures and ways of being and knowing. For many of the groups mentioned in this thesis this realisation marked a turning point not only as a group but also individually. It transformed the practice from an artistic, aesthetic exercise or a political project of confronting and revealing the colonial and westernised preconception of the everyday, into a project that expanded beyond mere identity politics and questions of accurate representation, towards one that aims not only to challenge social, political and cultural structures but also transforms the very way we interact and understand our subject position within society, nature and the cosmos. As a member of the *Ayllu Ñan* observes:

La música autóctona, la música andina, los instrumentos que se tocan vienen, en sí mismos, como una carga, carga ideológica, una carga sentimental, una carga energética que te empuja, realmente te guía, te impulsa a descubrir a buscar, a entender, a tratar de entender lo que

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<sup>116</sup> And apart from this question, it helped us in a way to better understand the peoples, and perhaps to get accustomed? Because now in our work it is a different matter right? That is when we go to the country side, when we see, when we have to do some activities there, I believe we don't have many problems. Because we have internalised, we share, I think that has helped us. That is a... what would be the word? [he thinks a moment] In reality it helped us in life. It was not just music. (My translation) DO in interview with XM, 02.4.14.

estás sintiendo en realidad. Por eso pienso [que es] algo natural que *Ayllu Ñan*, a partir de la música y el baile, ha llegado después de estos quince años a discutir estos asuntos, de tratar de hacer comunidad.<sup>117</sup>

There is an important reconceptualisation of the role music plays that is implied in this shift of attention, that I believe has to be highlighted. I argue that autochthonous music here can no longer be seen as a medium through which one critically intervenes in society, nor is it just a political tool that promotes the richness of a disenfranchised part of society. Following Mújica (2009, 2017) I argue that something else is at play here. Autochthonous music has to be understood as part of a complex component of a wider more complex system of knowledge, social organisation and religious system. In other words, in an urban context, that has been designed as the stronghold of colonial and later republican power, music became the door for many interpreters of autochthonous music, that made other worlds accessible, realities that are deliberately presented in the past, as foreign and undesirable. Torrico Carvajal observes that urban autochthonous music groups such as the *Willka Mayu* or can open up spaces within the cities where the religious, spiritual, social and political functions described above can take place. In this sense, he suggests that urban autochthonous groups fulfil a political and educational task.

En este contexto bastante complejo, la experiencia del Centro Cultural Willka Mayu juega un papel político y educativo –en el ámbito urbano–, ya que su propuesta permite seguir cultivando, recreando y socializando otra forma de concebir el lenguaje musical de la música autóctona, fortaleciendo así la identidad cultural de un pueblo, como una forma de hacer frente a la hegemonía cultural y mercantil del paradigma moderno y/u occidental.

Constituye éste un proceso de aprendizaje, un espacio para seguir recreando, vigorizando y aprendiendo los significados, códigos y arquetipos que hacen a la música autóctona y a la cosmovisión que la entreteje; contexto donde el hecho educativo se constituye en un

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<sup>117</sup> Autochthonous music, Andean music, the instruments that you play, they come with a weight, an ideological weight, a sentimental weight that pushes you, it really guides you to try to understand, to try to understand what you are really feeling. That is why I think it is natural that after fifteen years of music and dance, the *Ayllu Ñan*, are discussing these issues of building a community. (My translation) Interview with JS 28.03.2014

pretexto para dialogar, complementar y construir con el otro y la otra.<sup>118</sup> (Torrico Carvajal 2014, 63)

Music, my fieldwork similarly suggests, provides a framework of reference that allowed many of my interlocutors to understand and relate to worlds and realities that are deeply embedded, but are often presented as being outside of their immediate lived experience. In particular, this seems to be the case in regards to Andean ways of being and knowing:

Entonces, ahí está el reto, cómo nosotros -como músicos urbanos- [...] nos dejamos mucho llevar por la forma, por el objeto, por lo superficial y nos alabamos. Todavía tenemos la alevosía de decir que hacemos cosas magnificas y no vemos ese otro plano ¿no? ¿Qué implica hacer la música autóctona? [...] Son muchos elementos que se tejen para poder llegar a tener esa visión. Pero al otro lado también, en mi caso la música autóctona ha sido mi escuela. Gracias a la música autóctona, con consejo de mis hermanos yo le conté a mi mamá y mi mamá decía ven, estás joven acullicaremos, así se hace el k'intu, si vas a manejar coca, [...] aquí hay que hacer paso por paso. [...] Eso ha ayudado, en mi caso, para reencontrarme con mi mamá, con mi papá, volver a mi comunidad con los tíos. O sea, [...] los grupos de música autóctonos urbanos definitivamente son espacios de etnoculturación, para volver a recuperar lo nuestro. Pero allí depende de cómo lo estamos orientando.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> In this rather complex context, the experience of the Willka Mayu Cultural Centre plays a political and educational role—in the urban area—since its proposal allows us to continue cultivating, recreating and socializing another way of conceiving the musical language of autochthonous music, strengthening thus the cultural identity of a people, as a way of confronting the cultural and mercantile hegemony of the modern and/or Western paradigm.

This constitutes a learning process, a space to continue to recreate, invigorate and learn the meanings, codes, and archetypes that make autochthonous music and the cosmovision that interweaves it; a context where the educational is constituted through a pretext to dialogue, complement and build with the other. (My translation)

<sup>119</sup> There lies the challenge for us, for us as urban musicians [...] we let ourselves be carried away by the form, by the object, by the superficial, and we praise ourselves. We even have the malice to say that we are doing magnificent things and we don't see the other plane, right? What does it entail (take) to make autochthonous music? Many elements have to be woven in order to gain this vision. On the other side, in my case, autochthonous music was my school. Thanks to autochthonous music, with the advice from my brothers I told my mother and she said: come, you're young, let's chew coca leaves, this is how you make the *k'intu*, if you are going to handle coca, [...] here you have to do it step by step. This, in my case helped me reconnect with my mother, my father, helped me return to my community with my uncles. That is, [...] the urban autochthonous groups are definitely spaces of

Autochthonous music in this case is a site of encounters, where relations can be healed and old ties unearthed. The instruments were at the origin of their curiosity about the Andean world and its struggle against colonialism. The engagement with the Andean music grew into a wider interest in the cultures, peoples and traditions within which the instruments and the music are embedded.

For Mújica as well as for many other musicians, autochthonous music was a school, a space to learn, where in a way he was forced to confront the tensions between his urban life and upbringing with lived experiences of migration of his parents. The music did not just bring him closer to his family, it introduced him to a different way of understanding his own position and his relation to society and the world. In a similar way, a musician from Cochabamba, argued that music raised him and introduced him to an alternative, indigenous world that otherwise would have been concealed from him by modern urban life:

A nosotros, la música nos cría, ese es el principio. La música nos ha criado en un entorno urbano, si quieres. Nos ha ido criando con unos principios, con una ..., con un corazón distinto al de todos, ¿no? La música así nos ha criado. Y nosotros tenemos la labor, en el sentido del ayni, de criar la música, o sea, hacer música. En ese sentido también que la música tiene que ser buena, ¿no?<sup>120</sup>

The words '*criar, ser criado*,' that is, 'to nurture, to be nurtured, to raise' were recurrent throughout my conversations with many urban musicians. As the quote above shows it reveals the reciprocity that underlies their relation with autochthonous music. To play music allowed them learn and grow, but also demands of them to look after and nurture the music in return. To nurture music means to nurture the cosmology, the worlds that autochthonous music carries within it. Andean autochthonous music, Torrico Carvajal (2014, 63) thus concludes, plays an important role in the maintenance and reproduction of religious, ritual practices helping teach the values of complementarity and relationality at the centre of Andean religion and communal

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ethnosculturation, to recover what is ours. But there it depends on how we are guiding it. (My translation) Interview with Richard Mújica 03.04.2014

<sup>120</sup> We are raised by music, this is the principle, music has nurtured [raised] us in an urban setting, if you like. Music has been raising us with a set of principles and a heart that is different from everyone else, no? And so we have the duty following the ayni to raise the music, to play music. In that sense also, the music we play has to be good right? (My translation) Interview with WF 13.02.2014.

life. In this sense, he suggests music is an important thread holding the fabric of society together:

la música deja de ser sólo música, para jugar un papel social, político y pedagógico. La música juega un rol social tejido con muchos otros aspectos que hacen a la vida agro-festiva y ritual de la comunidad, constituyéndose en una forma de resistir, sintonizar y recrear una cosmovisión.<sup>121</sup> (Torrico Carvajal 2014, 63)

Urban autochthonous music groups create spaces in the westernising and western centric context of the city, so that an 'other-wise,' an Andean world can be worlded. But as I have discussed throughout this chapter, not only are the radical potentialities of urban autochthonous groups of worlding an 'other-wise' dependent upon the articulation of wider political and social forces, these forces also determine to a large extent the worlds that can be worlded. In this sense, I suggest that we have to understand claims of nurturing an Andean world within urban Bolivia and within the wider political context where since the 1980s the indigenous cause, peoples and cultures gained more and more attention throughout the country. Moreover, the direct intervention of the Indigenous organisations, movements and peoples in the constitutional process between 2003 and 2009, that started with political mobilisation in the 1990s, created a new context where people started to imagine and look at how Bolivia could be rethought from the experiences of the different Indigenous peoples and other popular sectors.

The question the urban autochthonous groups help us pose is how to do justice to these experiences, and practices of survival in the urban context of today. That is, the task of valorisation and empowerment of Indigenous cultures and their practices cannot just end with the accurate reproduction of the instruments and their melodies. This realisation and line of questioning allows us to challenge everyday practices and beliefs, and to develop a more 'holistic' approach towards the practice of music. The issue then becomes one of highlighting the continuities and the potentialities present within the popular and the everyday. It is the recognition of a different logic already there, shaping and conditioning people's decisions and lives. Moreover, their proposition is not necessarily one of transformation per se; rather it is the

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<sup>121</sup> The music stops being just music, to play a social, political and pedagogical role. Music plays a social role woven with many different aspects that make the lively agro-festive and ritual community, constituting a way to resist, tune and recreate a cosmovision. (My translation)

enforcement and recognition of different social and political practices as being compatible and originating within Andean ways of being and knowing. The task then is one of shifting attention from colonial modernity and in order to be able to step aside, in order that other worlds can be worlded.

Creo que es mucho más importante entendernos y hacer entender de que tanto el folklore como la música autóctona<sup>122</sup> que nosotros interpretamos, incluso actualmente, vienen de una historia de nuestros pueblos o viene de algo mucho más fuerte, más de ritualidad, más de nuestras culturas, más de algo más profundo todavía, de algo que tiene sentido. O sea, [en ese] sentido estoy hablando de que la música es muy importante en los pueblos y es algo que nosotros totalmente estamos olvidando.<sup>123</sup>

The music, in this case, did not bring a new world into being, rather it allowed to reevaluate and reexperience that which is already there. As this quote eloquently argues, the task of valorisation or revalorisation stands at the heart of the political project of the group. The challenge set to themselves is to reinvent, to find answers to the problems of the everyday from the values and ways of being that are the basis of the different indigenous peoples. Within colonisation the idea of division, separation and confrontation are key instruments to segregate and create ruptures within social groups or even entire societies. As such to frame the debate between the autochthonous and folklore in terms of dialectics is problematic as it tends to reinforce these confrontations instead of highlighting their anti-colonial connections, resemblances and common histories. Rather than denounce it as wrong, as copies or exaggerations, the quote above encourages us to rethink this relationship from within the connections and resonances between these two both. As the quote above argues, it is within the 'popular/peoples' that they have their common ground. The 'popular' in Bolivia is intimately related to the complex processes of colonisation of its native populations. The task then shifts: it is no longer enough to renounce and reveal how

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<sup>122</sup> For a more in depth discussion on the distinctions between autochthonous music and Bolivian folklore see chapter 6.

<sup>123</sup> I believe it is more important to understand each other and to understand that events today, both the folklore and autochthonous music we play, come from the history of our peoples, or it comes from something much stronger, more ritualistic, from our cultures, something even deeper, from something that has meaning. That is, I'm talking of the meaning that music is very important in the communities, and it is something that we are completely forgetting. (My translation) Interview with FF, 11.03.2014.



colonial logics of discrimination and exclusion are perpetuated and inscribed into the economic and political structures of society. Rather, the task is to help rethink and reevaluate that which already exists, the traditions and costumes from a perspective that values and respects the different Indigenous and anti-colonial movements.

The issue here comes back to the question of 'why do you play?' Are you trying to accurately and authentically present or rather represent Indigenous cultures and cultural practices as part of a display of cultural diversity? Is it an attempt to socially and politically valorise and vindicate the Indigenous cultures and their cultural and religious practices within spaces where these are denigrated and excluded? Or is about recovering and preserving the different cultural and religious practices and experiences? These are questions that accompany the different groups and shape their trajectories. The way they answer the question is thus important, as it sets a frame within which the different claims of authenticity and legitimacy. As such the implications of how you respond to these questions are significant as it determines the importance one ascribes to the accurate reproduction of music, dance and clothing, the choice of music one plays and the venues one seeks to perform in. There is no definite answer to the question of distortion and folklorisation of indigenous cultures in urban representations.

## Chapter 4: The complex roots and routes of *mestizaje*

To play the *tarkas* or the *sikus*, in the city of Cochabamba as the previous two chapters have discussed remains an uncommon view. Despite the recognition and political presence Indigenous peoples have gained over the past decades, the stigma, discrimination and denigration towards Indigenous peoples, their cultures and ways of living and knowing is an ongoing reality. As the testimony of Juan Arnés, an established musician of Cochabamba and founder of the music group *Los Kusis* shows, autochthonous music continues to be denigrated and frowned upon by urban audiences in Bolivia.

El urbano no quiere escuchar [la música de las comunidades], por que [los músicos] son indios, no tocan bien, no tocan limpio, [sus instrumentos] no [los instrumentos] están afinado, esta muy rutinario, siempre es lo mismo. Entonces ellos no aceptan eso.<sup>124</sup>

Similarly, Juan Arnés continues, it is not uncommon for his fellow musicians to disqualify the practice of autochthonous music as being inferior, repetitive, the instruments as not being properly tuned, or as being music associated with rural life.<sup>125</sup>

Actualmente tengo problemas en eso con mis colegas cuando quiero que toquemos digamos [...] una tarqueada. [Ellos me dicen] Ahh siempre es hermano la misma rutina esa siempre lo mismo. [...] ¿Pinquillada...? uuuta esta bien para el campo hermano. Estando aquí ACTUAL, te estoy hablando actual. Y son casos donde muchas veces uno si dice ¿por que? Y justamente tocamos ahí la colonización. Nada esta descolonizado. Seguimos en la colonia. No?<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> The urban dwellers do not want to listen [to the music of the rural communities], because the [musicians] are Indigenous, they don't play well, they don't play clearly, their [instruments] are not correctly tuned, it is too humdrum, it is always the same. So they do not accept it. (My translation) Interview with JuA, 16.06.2014.

<sup>125</sup> As Gilka Wara Céspedes (1984) shows this dismissing opinions about autochthonous is not new, rather it seems to have been the dominant opinion among creole elites in beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>126</sup> Currently, I have problems on that with my colleagues, when I want us to play a *tarqueada*. [They tell me] Ahh my brother it is always the same routine, that tatatatata is always the same. [...] Pinquillada ouuf that is good for the country side brother. That happens now, I am speaking of the present. And those are cases when one often asks oneself, why? And precisely there where the colonisation comes up. Nothing is decolonised. We remain in the colony, right? (My translation) Interview with JuA, 16.06.2014.

Implicit in these depictions is the idea that Indigenous peoples and their cultures do not belong in a 'modern' urban setting. These narratives reproduce the idea of an urban-rural divide, in which Indigeneity is relegated to the rural area, associated with communal practices and kinship ties, while the urban spaces have become associated with individualism, capitalism and a mostly *criollo* and *mestizo* population. For Juan Arnés these descriptions of autochthonous music as being 'just noise,' savage, unsophisticated and belonging to the rural area by audiences and musicians alike is the result of ongoing colonial discourses that shape Bolivian society.

Starting from an encounter between the *Kurmi* and migrants of the province of José Ramón Loayza, La Paz on a football field near Tiquipaya, the chapter problematizes categories of Indigenous and *mestizo* within Cochabamba as well as within the academic literature. The chapter seeks to show how these colonial discourses present the history of Bolivia as the confrontation between Indigenous and *mestizos/criollos*, rural against urban—and between *barbarie* against *civilisation*, colonised/oppressed against coloniser/oppressor. Categories such as *mestizos*, indigenous or *criollos*, are presented as if they were self-evident and fully cohesive entities, organizing societies, and cultural productions since the conquest. The chapter argues that by building the analysis on the assumption of a trans-historic and biological continuity of these categories, one risks to silently reproduce the violence at heart of colonialism, but more importantly, one fails to move beyond the dichotomies of coloniser/colonised, master/slave as organising principles. This has serious implications on how we come to understand and frame autochthonous music and the claims to valorise, promote and nurture autochthonous music. The chapter thus follows Mallon (1995, 12) when she suggests:

Our challenge is to understand how the multiple discourses of gender, race, ethnicity, and, increasingly, class interacted and were transformed and rebuilt historically, in the context of particular social formations, conditioned by the particular practices of the people involved.

By rendering more complex our understanding of the processes often described under '*mestizaje*' or '*campesinización*', this chapter's aim is to reveal how Indigeneity continues to be construed as being under threat of disappearing or of assimilating into modernity while the cities are reaffirmed as 'de-Indianized' spaces of modernity and progress. Doing so the purpose is to problematize this picture. Moreover, the

chapter questions the homogenising tendencies implied within *mestizaje*. The chapter argues that categories like *mestizo* and Indigenous, are inherently complex and intertwined processes. Following the development of these categorisations can help us reveal the emerging social structures, and groups they are said to describe as well as the political and social imaginaries that inform them.

#### 4.1. Bruno Moqo, urbanisation and migration in Cochabamba

On the 24 of November 2013, I joined the *Kurmi* to play the *Moseñada* (sometimes also referred as *mohoseñada*) at a closure of a small football tournament, not too far from Tiquipaya. This was a very different occasion to the other events in which I participated with the *Kurmis*. The *Kurmi* were invited to take part in the closing event of a small football tournament organised by and for residents of the province of José Ramón Loayza (from here onwards Loayza), La Paz, living in Cochabamba. *Los Tigres*, a music group composed of residents of Loayza, had asked the *Kurmi* to join and support them at the closing ceremony. Over the past three years, the *Kurmi* had relied on *Los Tigres* for the celebration of San Miguel, where both groups had participated for three consecutive years with the *Moseñada*, an Andean wind instrument of the *pinkillu* family, native to the area of Loayza (Sigl and Mendoza Salazar 2012a, 535).

I arrived with the *Kurmi* at around two in the afternoon at the football field of Bruno Moqo, a small village south of Tiquipaya, on the way to the city of Quillacollo. The Football field in itself was nothing special, rather it was typical of so many other fields around the country, with fading white lines designating the pitch with more stones than grass on its surface. The field was surrounded on two sides by several meter-tall eucalyptus trees and bushes, providing a welcoming shadow in the heat of November. Each team had established their own little camp on the edge of the pitch. As we arrived, the final game had already ended, and the prize ceremony was about to commence. At the height of the middle line, people had assembled around a couple of improvised tables with different-sized trophies on top as well as a pair of speakers projecting the voice of the announcer across the field. Contrary to other amateur football tournaments in the region, where the prizes are money, or food baskets, to my surprise on this occasion the prizes awarded were living animals. Third placed

won a little pig and three sheep, second place received a calf and a couple of sheep, while the winner became the proud owners of a young bull (see Figure 11). As soon as each team picked up their prize they were welcomed back at their 'camp' by their musicians. Combined with the speakers used by the organisers to announce the teams and to play the newest and most popular songs, a cacophony of sounds took over the football pitch, slowly transforming the sporting event into something else. As Javier Hurtado (1986) in his book *El Katarismo* shows, football played an important political role creating spaces where the *Katarista* movement was able to articulate and consolidate its political and social project in the 60s and 70s. Aymara organisers and activists like Jenaro Flores used football tournaments to organise and foster networks as well as to spread ideas and information across different communities, as their access to more formal sites such as the agrarian trade unions, and other more established community institutions was limited. The football pitch became a site around which the *Kataristas* political project would be articulated and spread, away from the reaches of the government and their henchmen (Hurtado 1986, 41-73). Football and the football field are not just important spaces in the political articulation of Andean rural communities. It also appears as places where people come together to celebrate during the different patron saint festivals both in the rural communities as well as among migrant communities in the big cities of the Andes. Turino (1993) for instance shows how many groups of Andean migrants in Lima, who play today pan flutes, started as football teams, who organised in leagues with teams composed by migrants from the same Andean regions. Rivera Sierra (2008) in a similar manner shows how football plays a key role bringing Bolivian migrants together in Lules Tucumán, Argentina. Football he argues has become among the migrant population the main event, creating spaces where different cultural and social practices are maintained and regularly reproduced. Tournaments such as the one that took place in Bruno Moqo, have become a recurrent appearance driven by the large migration flows Bolivia has been experiencing over the course of the twentieth century.

From the moment we arrived, and throughout the prize ceremony, the distinct sound of the *moseños* accompanied us. The sportive competition was giving way to a competition of music and dance. Over the course of the afternoon, the groups would take turns playing their *moseños* around the pitch with each group trying to outplay

the other. Soon after we finished eating our *wathiya*,<sup>127</sup> (Figure 12) one of the groups from the other side of the field started playing, and the dancers with their flags began to dance ahead of the group, winding around the pitch to the rhythm and the melody of their *moseños*. They danced counter-clockwise around the football field, stopping in front of the different group's camps, in an effort to showcase that they had the happier and better dancers and the louder and better musicians (see Figures 13 to 16). The celebrations around the football pitch in Bruno Moqo can in many ways be understood as way to mobilise and maintain strong ethnic ties and their cultural identity. The event unfolding in front of me, stood in contrast to general depictions of cultural and festive practices of Cochabamba, rather it resembled festive practices that are common around the Andean region. Invoking imageries often described in anthropological and ethnomusicology books, (Abercrombie 1998, Copa Choque 2010, van den Berg 1990, Zegarra Choque 2010) the football pitch developed into social scenery where communal practices are reproduced and kinship bonds were being fostered. Without being consciously aware, we became part of this complex economy of social relations and found ourselves competing alongside *Los Tigres* against the other teams, in a very similar manner to how ethnomusicologist describe the competitions between communities in many Andean communities. (Stobart 2006, Turino 1993)

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<sup>127</sup> *Wathiya* is a traditional meal from the Andean region. It consists of meat, in our case it was lamb, potatoes and plantains cooked in between hot rocks in a hole.



Figure 11: The picture shows the prize ceremony of the small football tournament organised in Bruno Moqo by residents of the province of Loayza in La Paz. In the centre, the representative of the winning team is receiving the main prize of the tournament. Photo taken on November 25, 2013 by the author.



Figure 12: Members of *Los Tigres* opening the 'oven' where the *wathiya* cooked and taking the different meat pieces, potatoes and plantains from in between the stones. Photo taken on November 25, 2013 by the author.





Figure 13: The picture shows one of the teams winding their way around the football field to the sound and rhythm of their *maseños*. Photo taken on November 25, 2013 by the author.



Figure 14: Shows the *prestes* loaded with bread rolls and freshly harvested productions around their shoulders, leading the column of dancers and musicians. Photo taken on the November 25, 2013 by the author.





Figure 15: The picture shows an ensemble of *moseñada* composed by members of the *Kurmi* and *Los Tigres*, dancing and waving their flags on their way around the football field. Photo taken on November 25, 2013 by the author.



Figure 16: This picture shows the musicians of the *Kurmi* and of *Los Tigres* playing the *moseños* on the side of the football field. Photo taken on November 25, 2013 by the author.

This 'Andean' imagery that unfolded in front of us, in many ways stood at odds with dominant academic depictions of Cochabamba's valley inhabitants (also referred to as *vallunos*). Albro (2010b, 6) poignantly summarises this academic consensus where the *vallunos* are described as:

a long time de-Indianized peasantry that over time has successfully manipulated vertical ties as clients to urban elites and state politicians, to solidify their own access to land, material, and capital. [...] This regional combination, then, of social displacement, the lack of complex indigenous cultural forms (or extended kinship ties), no long-term historical memory (or corporate organization), competitions of class, and a concomitant fluidity of ethnic categorization have all participated in producing a set of circumstances within which cultural identities are understood to be weakly defined and where questions of identity are anything but clear-cut.

As Albro summarises here, the population of Cochabamba is differentiated from the people in the Andean highland where communities are seen to have strong 'cultural and ethnic identities,' with 'long historical memory.' The *valluno* on the other hand, is characterised by having seemingly fluid and hybrid identity, associate to a long process of migration. *Mestizaje* in the context of Cochabamba is thus almost literally understood by many as a mixing of different ethnic groups and cultures since before the arrival of the Spanish conquerors. An exemplary and often referenced case of this dominant discourse is Xavier Albó's work, in particular, his article on the 'peasant' of Cochabamba (Albó 1987b). In which he describes:

A diferencia de las unidades étnicas del Altiplano, que desde siglos atrás tenía sus identidades y organizaciones sociales claramente definidas, los valles y serranías de Cochabamba fueron desde épocas remotas el lugar de encuentro de muchos grupos cuyos núcleos estaban en otras partes.<sup>128</sup> (Albó 1987b, 45)

This diversity is seen as the result of different migratory flows that already took place before the arrival of the Inka and later Spanish conquerors, and only got intensified during the colonial era. This foundational diversity according to Albó explains the

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<sup>128</sup> Unlike the ethnic unities of the Andean highlands, who for centuries had clearly defined identities and social organisations, the valleys and the mountainous area of Cochabamba were from far-off times, the place of encounter for many groups whose nuclei were elsewhere. (My translation)

lack of a strong overarching identity. The history of bringing together people from diverse cultural and ethnic background is what characterises the *valluno* identity. In this sense Albó (1987b, 46) concludes that:

ya desde esos tiempos Cochabamba era un espacio geográfico abierto, un punto de encuentro, cuya identidad consistía en su propia falta de identidad, y cuyo signo de éxito y progreso era la acomodación a lo nuevo que iba llegando[.]<sup>129</sup>

Following this, Tórrez (2012, 26-27) argues that this particular *valluno* identity, as open, adaptive, capable of assimilating different cultures into one and ‘ahistorical’ would become the foundations, of an idealised process of *mestizaje* during the republican era. The valley of Cochabamba, as Albó mentioned above, thus became the example of a ‘successful’ process of de-Indianization that through different processes of acculturation and ethnic ‘mixing’ created a new society. Tórrez (2012, 25) explains that although this diversity and intercultural relations were the results of historical process, they are shaped by a political project aiming to construct a common *mestizo* national identity.

Históricamente, el mestizaje cochabambino fue el resultado de una “comprobación fáctica” de los procesos de interacción sociocultural interétnica; sin embargo, también fue -y es- parte de una edificación discursiva en torno a la nación como una forma de identidad colectiva o comunidad cultural propia de la época moderna.<sup>130</sup>

The *mestizo* identity that was constituted within the valleys of Cochabamba was predicated upon the erasure and transformation of indigeneity. From the beginning it implied a process of modernisation and assimilation of the different cultures, giving way to a cultural expression that was seen as new. It was constructed in opposition to the communities and cultures of the Andean highlands.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> since those times Cochabamba was a geographically open space, a meeting point whose identity consisted precisely of a lack of their own identity, and whose signs of success and progress were accommodating the new that was coming[.] (My translation)

<sup>130</sup> The *mestizaje* of Cochabamba was the result of a ‘factually substantiated’ process of sociocultural, interethnic interaction; nevertheless it was—and is—also part of a discursive construction around the nation as a form of collective identity or cultural community befitting of the modern era. (My translation)

<sup>131</sup> As is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 this particular assumption of an assimilated native population would serve as the foundations of the nationalist political and social project that emerges out of the Chaco War and the 1952 revolution.

In a sense, the events on the field seemed to confirm the image of the Andean highland community as one with a strong ethnic and cultural identity, that stands at odds with the seeming *mestizo* culture of Valley inhabitants of Cochabamba. Bustamante Morales (2005) in her study of intercultural relations in Montecillo and Tiquipaya shows that these identity constructions are not just academic or political constructs but that they are very much part of the every day, and shape the sense of self for many valley inhabitants. The ethnographic material collected in her work shows in great detail how perceptions of the '*Montecilleña*' and '*Tiquipayeño*' are reliant on the exclusion and othering of migrants, in particular migrants of the Andean highlands. In this sense, she observes that in "Tiquipaya existe una larga historia de discriminación hacia los pobladores que son de las alturas."<sup>132</sup> (Bustamante Morales 2005, 83) Her study reveals how a particular *valluno* identity is maintained against the influx of new migration from the Andean highlands, through a continuous reaffirmation of the Andean inhabitant and migrant as the Other, the foreign, the indigenous. The 'indigenous' or traditional is relegated to the realm of the 'ancestral' and is presented as something that is under threat of disappearing. In this sense, she suggests that in Montecillo (and I would add in the broader region of Tiquipaya) the different ancestral and communal practices are giving way to modern urban lifestyles:

A medida que va pasando el tiempo y la urbanización se acerca más y mas, las prácticas de vida tradicional se van perdiendo en Montecillo. Actualmente, la presencia de elementos culturales de tradición ancestral es reducida [...]. El *ayni* y la *mink'a* son prácticas tradicionales que ya no están vigentes; priman, por el contrario, prácticas de producción y convivencia individualizadas.<sup>133</sup>  
(Bustamante Morales 2005, 74-75)

The identity construction of the *valluno* thus entails a process of modernization and urbanisation that is necessarily understood in opposition to ancestral or Indigenous cultural practices both internal and external. The *valluno* identity is predicated upon

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<sup>132</sup> "In Tiquipaya there is a large history of discrimination of the highland population." (My translation)

<sup>133</sup> As time goes by and the urbanisation comes closer and closer, the traditional living practices are being lost in Montecillo. Currently, very few cultural elements of ancestral tradition remain. [...] The *ayni* and the *mink'a* are practices that are no longer practised, rather to the contrary they have given way to individualised practices of production and cohabitation. (My translation)

the idea that Indigeneity and Andean cultural practices are essentially foreign and only practiced far away in the Andean highlands. This contributed to a process of erasing and degrading both local and migrant cultural, social, and economic practices that were deemed to be 'ancestral' or 'Indigenous.' (Rodríguez Ostría et al. 2009). In this sense are the events a manifestation of the large migration and urbanisation processes that Bolivia is going through in the second half of the twentieth century? Was I witness to a disappearing cultural practice? Can we just assume that these communities will over time lose their cultural or ethnic ties and assimilate into the *mestizo valluno* culture? Or is this a sign of an Andeanisation of the Cochabamba valleys and reintroduction of Andean communitarian values?

Over the last couple of decades, a number of publications have started to question this narrative of the *valluno* identity construction. In particular the work of authors like Larson (1998), Tórrez (2011, 2012), Gordillo (2007), Goldstein (2004), Albro (2000, 1998, 2010b) as well as Barragán (2009), Calestani (2012), Canessa (2007, 2012), Sanjinés (2004, 2014) have shown how our understandings and meanings of big categories such as *indigenous*, *mestizo* and *criollo*, are the outcome of centuries of intertwined, overlapping, and interconnected processes, discourses, actions and reactions by different participants somehow involved within or connected to the colonial machine. These categorisations impacted and transformed both the colonial as well as the native populations, although in different ways, making these terms so complicated and socially loaded.

The concept of the *mestizo* cannot thus be reduced as a purely descriptive function, neither is it a very useful analytical tool. The concept is inherently interwoven with contemporary imaginaries, historiographies and political ideologies. In this sense, echoing Simone Bignall's (2011) work on the question of a postcolonial agency, the question is not so much what *mestizos* are, rather what different conceptions of the *mestizaje* and *mestizo* allow us to do, or more importantly in this case, what do they silence and obscure? A dominant assumption inherent to notions of the *mestizos* and therefore of *mestizaje* is, as discussed above, the idea of cultural assimilation and ethnic fusion.<sup>134</sup> In this sense Rivera Cusicanqui's (2010b, a) differentiation between a *mestizaje de sangre* and cultural *mestizaje* is an good example. Her conceptualisation

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<sup>134</sup> On the topic of *mestizaje* see also Wade (2005, 2010).

thus, sets both *mestizaje de sangre* and cultural *mestizaje* deeply in the colonial past, as outcomes of colonial policies and native responses and reactions. For her, the:

emergencia del fenómeno mestizo en los Andes forma parte del proceso más global de desquiciamiento del mundo indígena, que se inicia con el pachakuti en 1532. No cabe duda que su origen más temprano, en tanto mestizaje de sangre, se remonta a la práctica de la violación y acaparación de mujeres por parte de encomenderos, curas y soldados españoles.<sup>135</sup> (Rivera Cusicanqui 2010b, 72)

*Mestizaje de sangre* in this first instance then refers to the literal mixing between two distinct ethnic and cultural groups within the frame of the conquest and subsequent colonisation of the Andes and is therefore intrinsically imbued with its constitutive violence. As such, it is an outcome of what she calls the ‘unhinging’ (*desquiciamiento*) of the indigenous world’ that colonialism brought about. *Mestizaje* and *mestizos*, are not therefore the mix of any two distinct ethnic groups, rather it is the outcome of the ‘mixing’ between Native Americans and Spanish Europeans, within the particular social project of Spanish colonialism in the Americas. Rivera Cusicanqui leaves no doubt that *mestizaje* is from the beginning a part of the strategies to assimilate and the westernise native peoples and is therefore inseparable to Spanish colonialism. Colonialism was not just about economic exploitation and military domination; it was loaded with a civilising project that aimed at transforming the native populations.

The category of the *mestizo* juxtaposed to the Indigenous allows both Rivera Cusicanqui here and Albó above to depict broader and often intertwined processes as simple and straight forward with clearly identifiable good and evil, depending on which ideological perspective one takes. These categories can supposedly be used unproblematically, as they are seen to describe apparently self-evident and differentiable ethnic groups, providing readers with deceptively distinguishable, homogenous, and demarcated entities, that everybody can see and experience. As such, these concepts appear to float in time and space, their meaning and implications are always contextual and embedded within the particular discourses and struggles

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<sup>135</sup> The emergence of the mestizo phenomenon in the Andes is part of the more global process of unhinging the indigenous world that begins with the pachakuti in 1532. No doubt the earliest origins of ‘mestizaje de sangre’ dates back to the practise of raping women and of hoarding by encomenderos, priests and Spanish soldiers. (My translation)

of any given moment and space, providing points of reference around which social, political and economic life can be made sense of. To do so, they rely on what Peter Gose (2001, 18) calls 'the myth of conquest;' where the conquest is imagined as a seemingly straightforward event and the idea of two distinct and homogenous entities is still imaginable; two separate entities which the categories of Indigenous, *mestizo* and *criollo* are directly related.

The conquest thus gets reduced to a moment in time and space where two homogenous groups clash against each other, producing clear 'winners' and 'losers,' setting up a foundational antagonism between coloniser and colonised. To this day, this dichotomization functions as an ordering principle which determines social, political and economic relations and establishes the conditions of possibility for what is deemed possible and what is not. In other words, contemporary conceptions of the categories such as *mestizo*, or *criollo* are deeply embedded within wider conceptualisations and historical narratives of the conquest and the colonisation of the Andes. As a consequence, how we come to understand the conquest and the colonisation of the Andean region have profound implications for our contemporary understandings of resistance, agency and ultimately decolonisation.

The 'myth of conquest' not only serves to draw a direct racial continuity between today's social categories and those at the moment of the encounter, but it also implicitly sets up a hierarchical relation between those considered descendants of the Spanish and those descendants of the colonised native populations. This does not mean that we can or should disconnect present day categories of identification from their colonial origins. Rather, I suggest that we have to account for how people make sense of their identities, their everyday lives and their decisions within the different worlding process at play. Then as Gose (2001, 18) in his influential book *Aguas Mortíferas y Cerros Hambrientos* affirms and we have seen throughout this discussion:

Como todos los mitos, hay algo de verdad en el mito de la conquista, en tanto que la sociedad andina moderna sí debe algo de su forma y contenido a la conquista. Pero, dado que ambas partes del encuentro originario han sido tan enteramente transformadas la una por la otra durante su interacción posterior, debemos concluir que este modelo de la conquista obnubila al menos tanto como explica la historia. No obstante, hay un uso constante de estos términos "raciales" para negociar la indeterminación de las relaciones sociales en los Andes

modernos a través de un acto primordial de violencia creativa y clasificadora.<sup>136</sup>

These categories cannot then be disregarded and replaced as they continue to shape and inform peoples, organisations and movements. What is needed is a framework that accounts for, and has at its foundation the diverse and heterogeneous history and social context these categories emerge from. Building on Barragán (2009), I suggest that we understand identities and identification categories such as 'Indigenous,' '*mestizo*,' as fluid, complex and often contradictory social phenomena that cannot be simplified without homogenising and losing analytical depth. Such an approach would allow us to avoid depictions of the Indigenous as backwards, and passive and that are foundational to the idea which suggests that Indigenous peoples and cultures are meant to disappear.

By portraying the conquest and colonisation as the clash between relatively homogenous entities of Spanish versus 'Indians,' and coloniser versus colonised, one ends up with apparently self-evident groups, and straightforward processes and narratives, where Identities, agencies, and characteristics of groups become fixed through time and space. Further, by evoking this mythical encounter between two 'pure' entities in the 1530s, a rigid and racial dimension that renders the entire colonisation into a very stiff process that unfolded over time is consolidated. A direct continuity can then be drawn, as different racialised categories of indigenous and Spanish (later transformed into *criollo/mestizo*) are portrayed as unchanged, the Indigenous remain characterised by their backwardness, passivity and lack of civilisation while the *criollos* remain the civilised agents of progress and change (see chapter 2). By tapping into this framework both Eurocentric and anti-colonial narratives perpetuate the idea of homogenous entities, out of which coherent actions are seen to emerge. Both operate within the same foundational dichotomy and therefore end up reinforcing and building upon the assumptions of internal coherence, and external incompatibility among categories. This makes it tough to avoid the coloniser versus colonised dichotomy, and trapping the analysis within

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<sup>136</sup> Like all myths, there is some truth in this myth of the conquest, in as far as modern Andean society does owe some of its substance to the conquest. However, since both sides of the original encounter have been so thoroughly transformed by each other during subsequent interactions, we must conclude that this model of the conquest clouds at least as much as it tells the story. However, there is a constant use of these "racial" terms, to negotiate the indeterminacy of social relations in the modern Andes founded upon a primordial act of creative and classificatory violence. (My translation)



discussions of master versus slave, that condition how we understand oppression and what can and cannot be identified as resistance.

Yet, as the following section will argue the conquest and the colonisation were everything but homogenous and straightforward processes. Rather the very opposite seems to have been the case, as we shall see in the following sections. The conquest was a highly chaotic and heterogeneous process where local populations, geographical landscapes, as well as interpersonal relations played as important roles as the ones played by the Spaniards in shaping and defining the form and outcome of conquest and subsequent colonisation. The section argues that mainstream depictions of easily identifiable (evil) colonisers and (poor and/or savage) colonised peoples struggling between each other over land and survival have thus become harder to sustain.

As a consequence, our conceptual frameworks that rely on seemingly homogenous and unidimensional relations of exploitation struggle to explain how and why certain events and processes took place. The challenge is to find a way to address the agency and both active and passive anti-colonial resistance of Indigenous peoples without victimising or downplaying the colonial atrocities and attempts of both physical and cultural genocidal extinction of the different Indigenous populations, cultures and religions. Drawing on the historical literature the section seeks to show that there were no monolithic and omnipotent oppressors nor were their victim groups monolithic either. I follow the argument Steve Stern (1993) made in his ground breaking book; *Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest*, that suggests that the conquest and colonisation were highly contested and dynamic processes, where boundaries were explored, and new or different forms of cohabitation were experimented with in attempts to make sense and so as to give meaning to the new 'reality' that was emerging.

## **4.2. Alternative narratives to the Conquest**

As several different studies across the Andes show, the conquest and the consolidation of the colonial empire was anything but a straightforward task. It was a patchwork, plagued by internal divisions both inside the Spaniard's camps as well as among different native societies, played out on a vast and very diverse

geographical landscape (Barragán and Thomson 1993, Bridikhina 2007, Castro Gutiérrez 2010, Larson 1998, Lienhard 1992, Mallon 1992, Ramírez 1998, Restall 2003, Saignes 1985, 1995, Stern 1993). The conquest was the outcome of continuous interactions and entanglements between different native populations, individuals and the conquistadors (Denevan 1992, 2011, Sluyter 1999, 2001). The conquest did not take place in a socially or culturally empty space, as Denevan (1992) suggests in his famous article, Europeans did not encounter an empty, wild or pristine landscape upon their arrival. The landscapes and geographies of the American continent were rendered accessible and to some extent comprehensible for the newly arrived through the active interaction and modification of the environment by the native populations. Scott's work further demonstrates in great detail how the early Spanish conqueror's experience was shaped and in many ways was made possible through their interactions and exchange with the native populations, and their existing infrastructures, as well as agricultural practices.

The relentless mobility that characterized many Spanish accounts of services in Peru, [...] must therefore be understood, at least in part, as a product of indigenous agency that shaped Spanish experiences in profoundly corporeal ways. This agency included not only the material and military assistance proffered to the conquistadors by Andean groups, but equally the ongoing practices of cultivation, settlement, and construction that preceded the Spaniards' presence and guided the geographies of conquest once they had arrived. (Scott 2009, 35)

In other words, the conquest did not take place on a white canvas. The 'pristine myth' of the 'New World' as Denevan (1992, 2011) has coined it, was part of the epistemic and ontological project of conquest and colonial domination. By projecting the image of an 'augural scene of discovery' (McClintock 2013) upon the colonised lands, the colonisers set the foundational negation of Indigenous agency, that allowed for questioning of their humanity, and capacity to have rights. The 'pristine myth' and 'augural scene of discovery' is the first of Dussel's (2008b, a) negations, a 'negation of the negation' (discussed in chapter 1) that underlies the legitimation of colonial rule. Gill encapsulates the implications of this foundational negation when he asserts that:

the erasure, via racialized dehumanization, of the integral role of indigenous practice and knowledge in the formation of ostensibly non-human natures such as soils, forests, and waters constitutes a fundamental condition of possibility for the emergence of the qualitative society-nature distinction underpinning the frontier zone of appropriation of the capitalist world-ecology. Such erasure is, furthermore, vital to the construction of externalized nature as simply given as free gift, rather than reproduced through a complex co-constitution of indigenous practice, knowledge, and non-human agency. (Gill 2016, 117)

The negation of human agency and indigenous socio-ecological practices and embodied knowledges was an important step that not only allowed for the legitimization of conquest and settler colonialism but the denial of indigenous agency which invisibilised their humanity as they are collapsed into the realm of the natural.<sup>137</sup> This positioned the coloniser as the 'only' one capable of bringing about 'change and impact rationally' within the environment. Scott (2009) and Ramos' (2010) analysis of the early Spanish conquistadors in the Andean region is particularly revealing of how this negation was continuously reaffirmed as the different processes of acculturation, assimilation and evangelisation unfolded.

The Andean landscape that unfolded in front of Pizarro and his men was a geography that had been shaped and transformed over generations by the different cultures and civilisations. The Spanish conquistadors set out to conquer an ecologically diverse landscape that was populated by an even more diverse population, with their languages, histories, cultures, social, political practices and rivalries. As a result, part of the story of colonisation was the pre-existing infrastructure, villages, roads, fields and waterways that provided the Spaniards with enough familiar elements which allowed them to infuse meaning into the new landscapes and transform it into a 'colonisable' territory (or a territory worthwhile colonising). Analysing texts written by the first Spanish conquistadors who travelled through the Andes, Scott (2009, 39) suggests that:

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<sup>137</sup> For a broad overview and analysis of the legitimization of the Conquest see the edited volume by Castilla Urbano (2014) entitled 'Discursos legitimadores de la conquista y la colonización de América.'

These writings, then, reveal evidence of a sense of familiarity that permitted the Spanish conquest to become a practical possibility and that, most importantly, was primarily the outcome of ongoing indigenous practices of cultivation and construction.

The Andes were familiar enough for the Spanish to establish equivalences between what they saw and their social and political realities in Spain, while at the same time being alien enough so that the differences and contradictions did not appear to them at first glance. The same then was probably also true for the native populations. The arrival of the Spanish Scott suggests was probably not a traumatic experience for the native societies, rather their presence was quickly integrated within wider, already existing narratives and processes. As Scott (2009, 18) asserts;

the arrival of the first Europeans, far from being perceived by indigenous groups as a momentous occasion or dramatic point of rupture, was often of scant significance for Amerindians and was experienced, to highly variable degrees of intensity, as an event woven into a network of processes and practices that were established well before the Spanish set foot in the Americas.

In other words, it is very unlikely that the arrival of the Spanish created an existential crisis within Andean societies. Life continued to unfold within the realms of the expected. In this sense, the task following work of Scott (2009), Denevan (1992), Sluyter (2001) and Gill (2016) is to rethink the conquest and colonisation. Their work problematizes the assumption that the change and adaptation that occurred prior to the Spanish conquest can be understood as resulting from weakness, desperation or violent imposition. But, as Gade (1992) seems to suggest, change and adaptation were made despite the natives 'stubbornness.' The task is not to claim that the processes of acculturation, evangelisation and *mestizaje* were not violent impositions, but to affirm and highlight the existence of internal mechanisms, institutions and processes of the local communities that were at the heart of the decision-making processes, shaping and conditioning the realities that were being constituted. And in many ways the same processes that shape how we have come to understand indigeneity and *mestizaje* today. A good example of this is the article of Stobart (1996) where he shows how the origins of the *pinkillu* as we know them today is probably the result of different process of acculturation that assimilated European

organ building technology, in such a way as to produce a particular sonic effect that respects the aesthetic and cultural practices dominant within indigenous societies. This recognition of agency is not about reducing the impact, influence and violent imposition of European colonialism, rather it is to affirm an 'otherwise' too, it is an affirmation of the existence of other ordering principles other to European colonial modernity. (Shilliam 2015) This does not imply as Blaser (2013a) suggests a 'despite' of Europe, but an 'in spite of' European colonialism. The aim thus is to better understand why and how European religious practices, crops and livestock were adopted and incorporated by local populations without much effort, their inclusion was not externally imposed, but rather made sense within already existing practices and beliefs of the local societies. However, it is important to remember that within the heterogeneous Andean populations, what got assimilated and considered useful by local populations probably varied from community to community, family to family. By searching for a single response or reason, one risks silencing and overlooking the large variety of answers and reactions that the Spanish arrival provoked.

The first phase of Spanish colonialism was characterised by the drive of different adventurers, who in search of riches and fame privately organised incursions south from the Caribbean up to present Chile. From a Spanish perspective, the conquest was far from a homogenous process, and many different factions saw themselves competing for resources, land and labour forces. (Bridikhina 2007) The early private entrepreneurial driven conquest meant that the colonial project was plagued by constant internal divisions between conquistadors, missionaries and the Spanish crown. These internal divisions were conceived by contemporaries as a serious threat to Spanish rule. In particular, the crown was concerned with its limited representation and power at the early stage and was eager to grow its presence and influence in order to secure its income. It also seems suggestive that the crown's interests rested on a different temporal scale than that of individual conquistadors. The *encomienda* system was an early attempt by the Spanish crown to gain some control and loyalty of the colonised territories. The Spanish crown thus sought to bind the Spanish adventurers and conquistadors as well as local allied 'lords' bestowing them with the right to administer and control vast territories and its respective populations. The early colonial empire was characterised by its diversity; many *encomenderos* would often have to experiment, implement and negotiate a variety

of different policies and mechanisms to secure and expand their control. (Lockhart 1994, Restall 2003, Stavig 2000, Stern 1992)

The Colonisers' power and dominance remained, for the most part, fragile and unstable, relying strongly on local allies and their integration into the social and political economies of the societies they wanted to control. For Stern (1993) it is clear that for early Spanish Lords 'success,' relied more on their acceptance and capacities to incorporate themselves into the broader social and political practices of the communities they were hoping to rule over. Violence and brutal punishments were key tools of domination and subjugation of native populations but were not enough by far to ensure the dominant positions of the *encomenderos*. Stern and Scott's research suggests a far greater engagement and adaptation by the Spanish conquistadors than the dominant and popular historical accounts would have us believe. To assume total control or sovereign rule is thus misleading. The early colonial regimes lacked the means to take control of the subsistence of native societies. In other words, they lacked the coercive means to force the native communities into servitude; the main concerns were to find the best ways to extract the surplus capabilities of the communities. Larson (1998, 37) brings it to the point when she argues that:

[e]ven many years after military conquest, the encomenderos were confronted with Aymara lords who still controlled the basic processes of production and distribution within Andean societies. The Spaniards depended upon the persisting ability of those lords to command the labor and loyalty of ally peasants and to channel the flow of tribute to the "outsiders."

The heterogeneity and regional difference during the early conquest also provided scenes and circumstances where many different Indigenous communities and individuals were not only able to succeed and thrive economically but were also able to condition and actively shape the relations between themselves and the new colonial masters. The Spanish were thus far from being an omnipotent force. They were divided and driven by private interests and did not have the power or the institutions to impose their own social structures, laws or customs on the native populations, who often managed to maintain different degrees of autonomy. Similarly to Larson, Stern asserts that:

The dependence of Europeans upon native elites for access to exploitable labor in agriculture, transport, public works,

manufactures and mining, exposed the artificial character of foreign hegemony. The economy erected by the post-Incaic alliances was deeply vulnerable to change in the natives' cooperative policies. (Stern 1993, 44)

The power and control the Colonials could assert were rendered possible by, and therefore also found its limitations within, the populations and territories it wished to control. In other words, the conditions of possibility and the limitations of colonial power were set by the local population's agencies, but also their pre-existing socio-political structures as well as the geography of the territories in question. Throughout the colonial and republican era, colonial authorities, *encomenderos* and *hacendados* struggled to control the means of subsistence of the different native communities and struggled to build the long-lasting relations of dependence necessary. Thus it should not come as a surprise that many communities throughout the Andes did not lose their means of subsistence until late into the twentieth-century (Saignes 1985, Stern 1993, Turner 1997).

The fact that throughout the highland plateau, colonial lords and their Republican successors failed to take control of the means of subsistence might help us understand why their power and control has been so elusive over time. The organisation of labour, Stern (1988, 1993) argues, was far more complex than it is often believed. Different competing modes of organisations, provided native individuals and populations with opportunities to negotiate and outplay the system. Stern shows this through the case of Potosí, where the Spanish invaders found themselves not only competing politically but also economically with the local populations.<sup>138</sup> The case of Potosí is far from being an anomaly. The literature on the colonial era suggests that the Spanish found themselves often in competition with Indigenous entrepreneurs, and communities over agricultural products and access to the labour force. The Colonials' power and influence were from the beginning of the conquest negotiated and limited by the actions and responses of the native populations. Indigenous

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<sup>138</sup> The silver trade provided Indigenous communities and individuals around the *Cerro Rico* with a strong autonomous position, forcing colonial entrepreneurs to compete in the emerging markets with the native populations (Brown and Johnson 2012, Robins 2011, Stern 1988). However, even after the introduction of new smelting technology that allowed the Spanish to gain control over silver production, combined with the institutional reform under Viceroy Toledo after 1570s, a largely independent working force of *yanacunas* (free indigenous labourers) remained instrumental to the extraction of silver out of Potosí.

communities, as well as individuals, played an essential role, who through their behaviours, struggles and resistance shaped and conditioned colonial policies, categories and behaviours. (Robins 2011, Saignes 1985, 2015b) This by no means implies that there was no violence and discrimination, but rather that the Spanish found themselves in positions where they had to react to different measures, strategies, and behaviours from within the societies they were trying to control, and rule over in order to stay in power.

#### **4.3. *Mestizaje* and the Toledan Reform**

With the initial riches and benefits acquired through conquest and plundering coming to an end, and with increasing competition at the different silver and gold mines in the Andes and Mexico by local communities and individuals, the colonial elites were confronted with a serious economic and political crisis. This was heightened by the newly emergent armed and religious Indigenous anti-colonial movements<sup>139</sup> and shifting alliances, which pushed the Spaniard's colonial experiment towards a serious crisis between the 1560s and 1570s. Out of this institutional and economic crisis emerged a new political, economic and institutional system under Viceroy Francisco Toledo.

From the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the Toledan reforms brought the golden (perhaps more accurately the silver) era of Spanish colonialism, as the silver production reached its highest levels. (Brown and Johnson 2012, 17) Toledo's plans were ambitious. They aimed to tackle the dependencies and limitations the Colonials faced in the mines, agriculture and trade, where they saw their margins being eaten up by fierce competition by native individuals and communities. The Toledan reform thus had three objectives:

setting up a tribute apparatus that would extract wealth from native societies without at the same time wrecking their ability to feed themselves and Spaniards; mobilizing the huge labor force needed to mine the Andes' silver; and implementing among barely Catholicized

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<sup>139</sup> I am referring here in particular to the *Taqi Onqoy* movement that advocated the return to an 'Andean' order both on a political and in particular on a divine spiritual level. (Romero Flores 2015, 125-177)



people a rigorous, self-reproducing, system of parish governances such as the Council of Trent had mandated. (Saignes 1999, 63)

Toledo's aim was to find a way that would both secure the crown's income while at the same time maintain the communities that made it possible. In this sense, he was interested in protecting the communities from an exodus, or over-exploitation, by setting what the colonial administration thought to be tributes that would allow the communities to subsist. However, as already mentioned above, many of the measures taken by Toledo ended up undermining the social relations upon which the societies relied on to produce enough food to survive and to sustain a crumbling silver industry. As a result, Toledo's long-lasting legacies and effects were not economic but social and demographic.

This sections examines how the categories of the Indian, *Criollo* and *Mestizo*, got standardised and generalised through the Toledan reforms as juridical and tributary categories. (Saignes 1985, 1995) Doing so it shows how the institution of these categories were part of a wider attempt by the emerging colonial state to assert and project control over the claimed territories and its populations, both Spanish and Indigenous. As such, I argue that these concepts were integral parts of larger systems, designed to legitimise and secure the conquistador's control over land, resources and labour. But in as much as these juridical and tributary categories were designed to suppress and exploit the native populations and resources, I suggest that they also provided new openings and rifts which native peoples and communities would exploit so as to resist, challenge and alter colonial policies. (Larson 1998, 54-64)

Toledo's reforms aimed to maintain and consolidate the surplus capabilities of the native communities. It was these surplus capabilities of the agricultural production that lay the foundation for a profitable mining industry, as well as supplied the main monetary income for the crown and the local lords. (Cobb 2006) But the pressures the reforms imposed on the native populations weakened the very structures, practices and social relations that were the foundations of the different subsistence strategies that made a self-sufficient economy possible. As Saignes (1995, 168) has noted:

A few years after Toledo's return to Spain, waves of epidemics swept over Indian society. The survivors were burdened with more and more tribute and labor obligations, and they fled their homes to join

other groups and enterprises not under the caciques' control. By the end of the seventeenth century, the whole of indigenous society, both caciques and commoners, was in a state of upheaval.

The Toledan reforms addressed the dependence on labour through the institution of the *mita*, a type of mandatory and temporary labour service that Indigenous communities had to supply. As Saignes explains, the implications of the *mita* service for communities meant that an important part of the labour force was not available for other activities. The *mita* secured the supply of cheap labour that would almost function as a 'state' subsidy for the sectors the Viceroyalty considered to be vital to the crown's interests. (Larson 1998, 62) Furthermore, because the *mita* wages were deliberately held below the level of subsistence, communities often had to subvert considerable resources to support their *mitayos*. Policies like the forced displacements of families and communities into Spanish like villages, and the division of the Andes into bounded territories directly undermined the complex geographical strategies of agricultural subsistence across different ecological floors. Breaking key kinship ties between the valleys and the high Andean plateau made the communities more vulnerable to the unpredictable climate of the *Altiplano*. Years of bad harvests were especially tough on communities, as their traditional coping strategies based on what John Murra (1981, 1984) has referred to as a 'vertical network of archipelagos' were interrupted by the arbitrary Spanish reorganisation of territories. Communities, thus, no longer had direct access to goods from different ecological floors.

As a result not only were they pushed into a monetary-based economy through the introduction of tributes, but also had to secure food during times of bad harvest. This, for Larson (1998, 78-79), further contributed to the deterioration of kinship relations organised around principles of reciprocity and equivalence. She argues that this was particularly problematic for families with low social and economic capital (providing incentives to leave the communities). The concentration of populations in small villages not only helped the propagation of illnesses but probably also affected more deep-rooted social interactions and deep-rooted relations to land and their broader environment, making differentiations between men and women, rich and poor, and between ethnic groups more prominent. Saignes (1995, 168) in this sense observes that:

The social and geographic reorganization of the south Andean world in the seventeenth century reveals the triumph of divisive market

pressures and colonial policies. The abandonment by Indians of their settlement towns and the changes in fiscal categories would seem to indicate that pre-Columbian segmentary organization was dissolved and replaced by a social order based on market relations.

Combined with the fact that the tributes in labour and money were not adjusted over the years and as such were not always based on the actual number of inhabitants of the community, meaning that communities had to cover for those who had died or fled in order to avoid *mita* duties creating a negative spiral that slowly weakened communities. As a result, many communities ended up indebted, facing an adverse situation, with little incentives to stay. Indebted communities also saw no other alternative than to sell their land to the landed colonial elites or to other native lords in order to accumulate enough money to pay their debts and tributes. In other words, the rigid tributary system, the *mita*, as well as the cyclical epidemics, and everyday colonial violence posed a serious threat to many native communities.

As the example of Tiquipaya shows, colonial policies had a devastating effect in the long run, in particular for communities who for one reason or another had weak ethnic ties, or whose *caciques* lacked the necessary legitimacy and strength. As Larson (1998, 78-79) explains:

The resettlement created five Indian districts in the corregimiento (magistracy) of Cochabamba. Three of them—Sipesipe, El Paso, and Tiquipaya—were carved out of the Valle Bajo, on former Incaic lands where a variety of ethnic groups was clustered. [...] The thrust of Toledo's reforms in the valleys was to bind together the disparate, fragmented cultural groups into "royal villages" (pueblos reales) beholden to colonial bureaucrats (and their native intermediaries) for subsistence rights.

In settlement towns like Tiquipaya, there was no dominant group or *cacique* that could bring the different communities together and successfully stand against the Spanish encroachment, as was possible in other regions. From the beginning, the *caciques* relied on the colonial state to assert their authority and legitimacy. They did not have the support or indeed the kinship ties, that *caciques* possessed in other parts of the Andes, that would have provided them with legitimacy and more importantly social capital in order to make the economies of reciprocity and complementarity work. Ramírez (1998, 24) in this sense remarks:

Indeed, the curaca's ability to facilitate the functioning of the economic system was perhaps the most important reinforcement of his rank and position. Early testimonies clearly establish the ability to maintain or improve the well-being of the community as a criterion for legitimacy and succession to high office.

From the beginning, the *caciques* of the *Pueblo Real* of Tiquipaya struggled to keep up with their tributes and *mita* duties. By 1617 the village was in a desolate state, "almost all the men subject to the *mita* had abandoned the town of Tiquipaya, leaving mostly widows and spinsters in the pueblo. Nearby there beckoned the growing town of Oropesa [later named Cochabamba] and Spanish fields and orchards—free territory lying outside the confines of the "obligated" villages." (Larson 1998, 81) And yet, even though the demands imposed by the colonial state and the Spanish entrepreneurs, relied heavily on indigenous communities pushing their survival skills to the limits, many developed and adapted in ways that would allow them to continue to subsist, evolve and eventually recover. Similarly Saignes (1985, 10) observes:

Already at the beginning of the [17th] century, two observers (an ex-Corregidor of Sica Sica and the priest of Ayopaya) wondered whether this new condition of the indians – 'those from one town exchanged with those of another', or those from the Puna 'mixed up' (*revueltos*) amongst those from the valleys – was not the result of anti-fiscal tactics or of other obscure arrangements yet to be clarified.

Different communal but also individual strategies were developed in order to counter and evade the pressure created by the colonial powers. One of the more radical solutions against the colonial regime was migration. Larson (1998, 93) finds similar tendencies in her work:

Many of them [Indigenous subject to the *mita*] simply abandoned their official villages and dispersed among smaller hamlets in the region. [...] The depopulation of these villages [by the shores of Lake Poopó by 1610], as of many others, was the result both of the spread of European diseases and the flight of the villages' inhabitants. This turn of events signaled the deterioration of the institution of forced mine labor itself and the declining ability of the state and its ethnic collaborators to mobilize *mitayos*. The Toledan scheme to rationalize extraction, even while preserving communal access to resources, had

set migratory streams in motion all across the Peruvian landscape.  
[...] Flight and migration were more radical strategies of resistance  
than market participation.

The question of migration was a haunting problem for colonial elites from an early stage. Looking from the 'perspective' of the indigenous population, we can see that the reasons for the mass migration were multiple, and rather than being a sudden phenomenon, the roots of the phenomenon are dispersed over time and are often interconnected. More generally, the literature sees the causes of the mass migration away from the indigenous communities as heavily (although by no means exclusively) connected with the demands imposed by the tributary system and territorial reorganisation which are particular to the Toledan reforms (Cook 1990, Evans 1990, Larson 1998, Ramírez 1998, Saignes 1995, 2015a, Stern 1993, Wernke and Gamer 2013). The Spanish colonial power struggled to contain and control the movement of its native subjects, which meant any policy or mechanism designed to harvest the labour of the indigenous population was only effective as long as the population remained stable and in one place.

Toledo attempted to address this issue ordering a broad survey that created an overview that would allow the establishment of the tributary quotas and the *mita* contributions to which more than 600 established *reducciones* would have to contribute. (Saignes 1999, 63) Providing the foundations for a larger institutional and organisational transformation of the colonial administration and its bureaucracy in to two separate republics. The new system of the 'Two Republics,' "was the late sixteenth-century juridical invention of the colonised 'Indian nation' and its 'republic of Indians' juxtaposed, in binary fashion, to the colonial 'Spanish nation' and its 'republic of Spaniards.'" (Thurner 1997, 5) The juridical categories thus became engraved into the land by creating a rural Indigenous zone and a Spanish urban zone.<sup>140</sup>

By creating territorial boundaries and clearly demarcated administrative territories, the resettlement of the native population into villages by the Spanish under Toledo

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<sup>140</sup> The solution of the two republics further institutionalised the dichotomy of Creole/Spanish vs. Indigenous as well as village(rural)/cities(urban), a dichotomy that still shapes society and politics in Bolivia today. Since the beginning, the cities were essential to the conquest. The urban space was more than just the physical manifestation of the colonial power; it was also a symbolic space, representing violence and occupation for some, and Europe, civilisation and progress for others. (Torrico 2013, Thurner 1997)

had hoped to keep the population numbers stable and controllable. But it turned out to only be a temporary stability. The following century saw declining populations within the 'Republic of Indians' as it reached worrying dimensions for the viceroyalty. The shrinking populations within the Indigenous villages probably had the largest impact for the *mita*, as the number of available *mitayos* dropped. This also meant that the industries which enjoyed their cheap labour force saw increased production costs. This is especially true for mine owners. Although the *mita* labour force never accounted for one hundred percent of the work force, it nevertheless allowed many mine owners to make considerable profits. The labour shortage in mines was aggravated by the fact that many communities and individuals, opted to pay the mine owners to free them of their duties if they had the means. With the falling *mitayo* numbers, mine owners now had to hire additional labour from the 'free' labour markets of Potosí and other mining cities thus increasing the costs of production considerably, but also creating incentives for *yanaconas* (free indigenous labourers). These developments highlighted growing tensions between mining elites in Potosí and Oruro and the landowning elites (*hacendados*) in the valleys like Cochabamba. (Larson 1998, 102-108, Stern 1993, 144-157)

During the second silver boom of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, both elites had cooperated in an emergent interregional trade network that allowed for the *hacendados* (large Spanish landowners) to sell their agricultural products and other manufactured goods at inflated prices in the mining cities' markets, thus, directly benefitting from enormous profits generated by the silver. But the dropping silver prices and the shrinking margins meant that soon many of the *hacendados* of Cochabamba and other valleys could no longer compete in the mining city markets. (Larson 1998, 117-126)

As a result, the landowning elite of Cochabamba concentrated on the internal markets of the valleys and made most of their profits by speculating on a bad harvest in the regions. A rift began to grow between the landowning elites and the mining elites as their economic interests, and codependencies started to disappear. As the state no longer was capable of providing a cheap and reliable labour force, both sectors found themselves competing against each other. The reliance on *mitayos* to reduce the costs of production meant that a self-sufficient, stable and large indigenous population was in the interest of the mine-owning elite. Weak, and small

native communities and an emergent landless population of *forasteros* (seasonal workers) or *yanaconas*<sup>141</sup> had a number of different benefits for the hacenderos.

The decreasing population in the Indigenous villages in the valleys of Cochabamba meant that *yanaconas* and *forasteros* found plenty of labour in the *haciendas*, but also in the *Pueblos Reales*, who regardless of their dropping population had to continue paying their tributes, and alleviated their duties by bringing in *yanaconas* and *forasteros* to work the lands and help with the tributes. However, the migratory status of *yanaconas* and *forasteros* often rendered them vulnerable as they could no longer rely on the self-subsistence economy of their communities. This made them more exposed to harsher conditions and some level of submission, in order to make ends meet, and often also to avoid the *mita*. A mobile and landless population also meant that the *hacendados* and rich Indigenous lords were able to create a direct dependency of the *yanaconas* and *forasteros* working for them. Indeed, according to Larson (1998, 102-115), various viceregal reports from the seventeenth century accused the 'greedy' *hacendados* and native lords of luring indigenous people to work in their haciendas under false promises, and to escape *mita* work. The outcome is that over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth century there was a significant increase in the *yanacona* and *forastero* population throughout the Andean region with valleys and lowlands often being the favoured destinations. Setting the foundation of the segregation between groups that would be considered to 'be Indigenous' and the 'other who are not anymore,' would become '*mestizos*.'

However, in as much as the Toledan reforms were about a formal separation between the two sectors of the colonial society, they were also about formalising and institutionalising the contact and exchange between Indigenous and Spanish populations. Whereas the city got reinforced as the space of and for the Spanish and the creole elites, the indigenous dominions became the *Pueblos Reales* and the rural areas. A distinction that remains very much in place in dominant discourses of today, which continue to reproduce the idea of a 'modern' city centre that 'lost' its indigeneity and a country side full of ancestral cultural and religious practices; a place where people have maintained their 'ancestral' and 'authentic' indigeneity.

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<sup>141</sup> The categories of *forastero* and *yanaconas* were employed by the colonial administration to describe individuals and families who moved away from the communities they had been born into. Rather than describing ethnic or cultural features, they often described activities and juridical situations particular to people who had left the jurisdiction of their native lords.

It is important to have in mind that even though these categories were created by the colonial administrations to control both indigenous and creole populations they never materialised into clear nor hermetic boundaries. Rather, as we shall see in the discussion of Cochabamba, these spaces and categories were constantly challenged and renegotiated. We are talking about a highly diversified area, with many different geological and ecological regions, where different groups follow many different interests and strategies. Indigenous communities as shown by both Rivera Cusicanqui (1986) and Larson (1998) were interlocked within a constant competition and negotiation over resources, land and political influence within a political, judiciary and economic context that was designed to suppress and exploit them. As such, the strategies were never set in stone; rather they were resourceful and inventive, happy to make use of both the old and new markets and trade routes. And as historical evidence continues to emerge from the colonial archives and archaeological sites, the stories of uncontested oppression and Spanish exploitation towards the local populations are questioned more and more, revealing complex, often intertwined and continuous social, political and economic relations between the different participants of these early days of Spanish rule in the Andes.

Though Indians were incapable of doing away with the exploitative structures as a whole, their actions forced crises, innovations, and reforms which determined the specific forms and limits that their exploitation took. (Stern 1993, 193)

As I have previously suggested, the conquistadors had to balance any policy or reform in order to secure their economic, political and social positions, while at the same time they had to control and tame Indigenous aspirations, preventing the internal colonial divisions from growing large enough to break down the empires' cohesion. In the last two section of the chapter, I explore in more detail how migration throughout the seventeenth century tested the colonial administration to its limits, but was also a key moment in shaping how the categories of *Indian*, *Mestizo* or *Creole* would come to be understood.



#### 4.4. Cochabamba: A mestizo valley

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the migrant population more than doubled the registered indigenous populations within the Southern Andes. The case of Tiquipaya in particular, and Cochabamba more generally, are often used to show how colonialism weakened and alienated people from their communities, forcing them to migrate away from their places of origin. Cochabamba is held up as perhaps the most extreme case of '*desquiciamiento* of the indigenous world' brought about by Spanish colonialism. The section, problematizes and critiques how dominant interpretation through the claim of *desquiciamiento*, affirm ethnic mobility and social change as a loss of 'indigeneity,' perpetuating the idea of the indigenous as passive, and the 'westernised' or 'western' subject as the only one capable of changing and maintaining their identity.

As I have mentioned in the previous sections of this chapter, from the beginning, the native communities in the valleys of Cochabamba had to compete for land, labour forces and markets with the large *haciendas* which were quickly established. In particular, after the Toledan reforms, with its forced resettlements into Spanish like villages, its monetary tributes and *mita* obligations posed a heavy burden on the populations of Tapacarí, Capinota, Sipe Sipe, El Paso and Tiquipaya—the five *Pueblos Reales* in the valleys of Cochabamba. The Toledos reforms had a particularly devastating effect on the scattered and small native communities of the valleys of Cochabamba. (Larson 1998, 78-79) Thus it was assumed that the territorial organisation of the Andes under the colonial regime and the displacement caused by the weakening of kinship bonds within communities, facilitated the migration of large parts of the population away from the *Pueblos Reales* during the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The *yanaconas* and *forasteros*, as discussed previously, constituted a new a new *mestizo/cholo* class; one which had lost its indigeneity. In this sense, Rivera Cusicanqui (2010b, 73) argues:

La crisis demográfica, la nivelación del tributo en dinero y la reglamentación de la mit'a crean, a su vez, condiciones para nuevos procesos que ahondarán la heterogenidad del mundo mestizo: la expansión del mercado potosino y la evasión del tributo o la mit'a a través de la huida. Los indios escapados de sus comunidades se

refugian en haciendas y “chácaras” españolas o concurren como fuerza de trabajo libre al mercado minero. Hacia fines del período colonial, en zonas de débil presencia étnica—como los valles cochabambinos—los sectores resultantes de la desestructuración de las sociedades andinas alimentan un temprano proceso de “campesinización” y mercantilización que se apoya en la creciente demanda de granos por el mercado potosino.<sup>142</sup>

The argument presented here thus suggests that as a result of weak communal ties, these communities were not able to protect and support the individuals during their *mita* duties. Because of this, many left their villages and sought refuge within the growing *haciendas*, where they would find protection from their *mita* and other tributary obligations. If we retake the example of Tiquipaya up again, as we saw above, by 1643 the village presented a dire picture. Most of its tributary population had left the village. In Cochabamba, the native population declined by more than 75 percent between 1573 and 1683, while at the same time the number of *forasteros* and *yanaconas* continuously increased. (Larson 1998, 101) By the end of the eighteenth century, the native population throughout the *Pueblos Reales* only represented one-sixth of its population. *Yanaconas* and *forasteros* were the majority of the population, providing the *haciendas* with a vulnerable but also extremely mobile population. This migrant population became a layer of society vulnerable to the forces of the emerging capitalist market and its atomising effect. These different processes developed into a complex system of land tenure.

Many valley estates were parcelled out to small-scale cultivators who paid rent. This is not to say that demesne agriculture was unimportant. The persistence of service tenure (obligación) and the onerous requirements of domestic servitude (pongueaje) is a testimony to the continued importance of production on the demesne for direct appropriation by the landlord. But more remarkable, at least in

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<sup>142</sup> The demographic crisis, levelling tribute in money and the regulation of the *mit'a* create, in turn, conditions for new processes that will deepen the heterogeneity of the mestizo: the expansion of the market in Potosí and evasion through flight of taxation or the *mit'a*. Indians escaped their communities took refuge in Spanish haciendas and “chácaras” or concur as free labor to the mining market. By the end of the colonial period, in areas with weak ethnic presence—like the valleys of Cochabamba—sectors resulting from the breakdown of Andean societies feed an early process of “campesinización” and commodification that relies on the growing demand for grains markets of Potosí (cf. Larson 1988, Rodríguez and Solares 1990). (My translation)

comparison to many highland haciendas in neighboring provinces, was the predominance of Indian and mestizo tenants (called *arrenderos* in Cochabamba). (Larson 1998, 411-412)

With the dropping prices of silver throughout the seventeenth century, it became less and less profitable to export large quantities of supplies up to the *Cerro Rico*. Throughout the eighteenth century the haciendas engaged in a variety of different forms of land tenure and labour relations reaching from personal servitude to more independent forms of land rental and crop sharing. Even though this new sector did not manage to compete with the landed elite fully, they did manage to reduce the margins within the local markets further. The *hacienda* system thus not only allowed small-scale agriculture to emerge but over time came to depend on it, as a reliable source of income in a largely stagnant market. (Jackson 1989)

The nineteenth and early twentieth century led to greater problems for the landed elite. The construction of a railway network connecting the major cities and mines in the Andean highlands with the ports in the Pacific opened the important highland and mining markets to cheap foreign grains and other products, displacing the locally produced goods from the highland markets. It also did not help that a series of tributary reforms connected with the land reforms of 1874, added additional stress to the hacienda system. The twentieth century, therefore, saw a deterioration of the living conditions on the haciendas, as market prices sank, the rent and the services to the *patrones* augmented. However, this crisis was also a chance for some:

The loss of altiplano markets, coupled with debt and periodic ecological crisis, contributed to the instability of hacienda tenure, and one strategy commonly adopted by hacienda owners was to subdivide and systematically sell off parts of their lands. Landless peasants, smallholders, and artisans from the urban centers in the region frequently bought hacienda lands. (Jackson 1989, 276)

In the article Jackson further shows how by 1946, Cochabamba by far contained the largest number of private properties in the entire country. This is seen as evidence of the emergence of a new class of small-scale peasantry. In contrast land tenure in the Andean highlands was mostly under the control of the *haciendas* or as communal land under the control of the indigenous communities. It is argued that this development in land tenure accentuated the harsh treatments that people living in the haciendas had to endure. Even though these small-scale producers continued to have

precarious living conditions, they were safe of the hardships and constraints of life in the hacienda, leading Albó (1987a, 381) to argue that:

Although the desperate defence by the communities continued [after the Chaco War] what came to the fore was the struggle of peons on some deteriorating haciendas, such as the ancient estates in the valleys of Cochabamba [...]. Initially, the peasants fought to better the conditions of life within the haciendas without questioning the validity of the regime itself. But little by little, they began to raise [sic] the destruction of the system itself, in the slogan “the land is for those who work it.”

The dominant argument thus suggests that the amalgamation of small-scale peasantry, exploitative labour relations and the mobility across estates, combined with the significant migration from the highlands and the weak ethnic ties of the local populations, created the conditions of possibility for the emergence of new types of (ethnic free) ‘citizen.’ A citizen that no longer could be classified under particular ethnic or even a racial category, rather the society emerging out of the valleys was characterised by its amalgam of origins from all over the Andes and the Amazon but also of Spain. This dominant discourse thus assumed that over time it became harder to differentiate between the established tributary categories of *yanaconas*, *forasteros*, *cholos*, or *mestizos*. Throughout the twentieth century, this new ‘class’ has been evoked to assert the benefits and necessity of whitening and westernisation of society, setting the framework for a new national project capable of transcending the categories of the colonial and oligarchical elites. For Josep Barnadas and Xavier Albó (1985) in their influential book *La cara campesina de nuestra historia*<sup>143</sup> this particular constellation in Cochabamba meant that the protests and movements that they see emerging, after the end of the Chaco War in 1935, was perceived as a break within the indigenous/peasant struggle. They argue that between the great rebellions of 1780 up to 1936 many of the movements and protests launched by rural communities, found their origins among the highland communities of the departments of La Paz, Oruro and Potosí.

Junto con el cambio de protagonistas, hay también una nueva forma de lucha. Los comunarios luchaban con su propia organización

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<sup>143</sup> See in particular chapter 6 sections 3 and 4.

comunal y sus esquemas de liderazgo. Ahora, en cambio, empiezan a ponerse de moda por primera vez los sindicatos.<sup>144</sup> (Albó and Barnadas 1985, 213-214)

The peasant revolts in Cochabamba were thus no longer based on the ethnic interests of the *comunarios*<sup>145</sup> (generally highland community members), whom these authors suggest fought against the growing usurpation of land and the growing intervention by colonial and later Republican elites upon their territories, rather Albó and Barnadas affirm that:

La mayoría, de las peleas que surgían ahora eran contra los abusos del patrón. Al nivel campesino el planteamiento en este sector no era tanto el de conseguir la propiedad de las tierras, sino sobre todo el poder trabajar tranquilos del abuso del patrón.<sup>146</sup> (Albó and Barnadas 1985, 224-225)

This shifts the argument away from community or ethnic interests towards one of class and individual rights. The ‘new movement’ they identify is one driven by class interest and not ethnic or colonial demands. There is a temporality and linearity that gets reaffirmed here. Colonial policies, taxation and *mita*, led natives to leave their hometowns, drawing them into the services of Spanish *haciendas*, creating a dependent ‘interethnic/mestizo’ (waged) labour force. *Mestizaje* and the concept of *mestizo* in the narratives of Albó and Barnadas (1985) as well as that from Rivera Cusicanqui (1986, 2010b) operate as explanatory as well as descriptive tools trying to make sense of cultural, social and political transformation which Andean people experienced under colonialism and the republican era.

In these explanatory frameworks, Albó and Barnadas, as well as Rivera Cusicanqui, make a number of quick assumptions. First of all, they assume that migration leads to the loss of one’s kinship ties and ultimately one’s identity and sense of belonging.

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<sup>144</sup> Together with the change of protagonists there is also a new kind of fight. The ‘comunarios’ fought with their own communal organisation and their own systems of leadership. Now instead, for the first time trade unions start becoming more popular. (My translation)

<sup>145</sup> Barnadas and Albó use the term *comunarios* to differentiate from *campesinos*. *Comunarios* in this case refers to members of mostly highland communities, *ayllus*, or *markas*, making allusion to a particular ethnic identity and communal ways of organising themselves. Whereas *campesino* primarily designates the rural population that does not live or is not organised around ethnic principles.

<sup>146</sup> Most of the fights that occurred now, were against the abuse of the patron. For the peasants, the approach in this sector was not to achieve the ownership of the lands but rather to be able to work peacefully without the abuse of the boss. (My translation)

Migration and identity loss are mentioned in the same breath as if one would automatically lead to the other, with no attempt to explain, or provide insight into the mechanisms of how these processes unfolded. Furthermore, migration is seen as a desperate act, or the last resort, while simultaneously migration carries a dark connotation of betrayal and corruption (Rivera Cusicanqui 2010b, 73), as if any assimilation of Spanish culture would mean a loss of one's native identity and culture. In this sense, there is an implicit assumption that migrants marched into atomised spaces, with no communal institutions, where they were on their own. All this fits well with a picture of the indigenous as being helpless against the colonial project and its modernity. As such, this argument is predicated on the affirmation of the *desquiciamiento* or detachment of native identities and cultures.

Both Rivera Cusicanqui (2010b) and Barnadas and Albó's (1985) accounts are held together through the affirmation of a 'mythical first encounter.' It provides them with the initial dichotomy around which their story of domination and resistance can be constructed. The story of colonisation becomes for them one with clear perpetrators and victims. Identity and culture are seen here as somehow closed or at least rigid entities, with identifiable cores (or essences). Colonialism is then regarded as the clash and or merging of two entities throughout the following 500 years. The conquest or colonisation is then understood as the continuous clash between two somehow cohesive social bodies across time and space. These identities and societies appear thus as somewhat stable and rigid entities, which continuously exist in and for themselves. By conceiving colonisation as the encounter of two distinct social entities, within a conceptual framework that views identities as rigid structures, the encounter between two such structures thus limits the number of possible outcomes this encounter can produce. Colonisation then becomes a teleological force that governs, organises and defines the relations between coloniser and colonised as perpetrators. Behaviours, actions and reactions are trapped within the initial dialectical tension of the encounter.

But far from being a singular case, the assumption of a mythical conquest and homogenous and transhistorical categories of Indigenous, *mestizo*, *criollo* can be found across political and academic discussions. This is particularly visible when culture and identities are evoked in the works of authors like Leichtman (1989), Ramos Felix (2009), Rios (2010, 2012) and Romero (1999, 2001). A good example is Michelle Bigenho (2002) who, in her book *Sounding Indigenous*, presents a nuanced account of

how notions of authenticity and identity are presented and articulated among Bolivian musicians up until 2000. Still, she struggles to escape notions of determinism and essentialism in her definitions of indigenous, *mestizo* and *criollo* identities.

Since the Spanish conquest, indigenous peoples of Bolivia have been forced into interaction with Spanish colonialism, and then with British and U.S. Economic and cultural imperialism. [...] Those who are not indigenous in Bolivian society may be labelled through the complex terms of “criollo” (Creole) and “mestizo.” While the term “criollo,” in the conquest period, referred to those who were of Spanish descent, but who were born in Spanish America (as opposed to the peninsular who were born in Spain), its contemporary meaning is more akin to a disassociation with any indigenous heritage. In its boldest sense, “mestizo” may refer to someone who has both indigenous and Spanish heritage, but the processes of *mestizaje*, the mixing of both indigenous and Spanish cultures, could be said to have reached all areas of Bolivian society. (Bigenho 2002, 3)

Bigenho is here confronted with a common problem which academics face when writing about colonial heritage and the ethnic composition of Bolivia. Moreover, this is the question of how to talk about colonialism and its effects on identities, cultures and categories without perpetuating the structures and mechanisms of exclusion and repression. The ethnic unity and homogeneity of the categories are silently accepted, thus implying what must be a direct link from the present to the conquest; the encounter between two homogenous and antagonistic entities. The *mestizo* then can only be described as the mix, the hybrid neither indigenous nor Spanish. This foundational assumption risks hiding, obscuring and racializing the often complex and intertwined relations and agencies, further rendering invisible the role and agency of the Andean populations played throughout time and space. As a result one ends up reproducing the idea that it was only native Andeans and Amazonians who were altered and transformed by the conquest. Change thus becomes a one-way path where ethnic mobility goes from the indigenous to the *mestizo*, (‘up to’ the *criollo*) but cannot go the other way. Progress, modernization, capitalism mirrors this logic and therefore can only be achieved by the destruction of the native Andean and Amazonian cultures. One risks drawing the initial dichotomy of coloniser against colonised on the basis of an assumption of cultural and also crucially biological purity

at the moment of encounter that continued throughout the colonisation, racializing the moment of the first encounter and any subsequent interactions between both sides. The *mestizo* appears in this story as a contradiction of a framework that is constructed around purity as the driving force of social relations, while at the same time it has to affirm the possibility of interaction and relationships necessary to create a mix in the first place. The exchange is thus set into a conflictual context of colonial violence. This is why the *mestizo* is often seen to have the ability to upset and challenge dominant discourses both of colonialism and indigenism.

By assuming a dialectical relation as the foundation of colonialism, we end up with a situation where there is little to no ground to understand everyday relationships outside the colonial dichotomy. All other driving forces that move outside the initial dichotomy and power relations are from the beginning subdued and rendered secondary. Motivations of the indigenous population are relegated and silenced even for those who pretend to speak for them. Saying this, I am not suggesting that coloniser-colonised relations are not important or should be disregarded, what I am trying to argue is that there may be other frameworks of reference, or other experiences which inform the different decision-making process that get lost when we reduce it to the dichotomy of the coloniser-colonised prism. This dialectical understanding of colonialism favours a depiction of the colonised as victims. Their actions are then presented out of a position of weakness, in the sense that *mestizaje de sangre* had to be the result of rape and violence, or that the inclusion of certain elements of European culture into Andean societies was the result of their imposition by the colonial state. This is not to say that this did not happen or that imposition and sexual violence were not frequent and decisive factors within the constitution of contemporary *mestizo* society. Rather it is to highlight that we are still unaware as to the motivations and reflections which led people to act as they did. In a sense, I am suggesting the narratives of the authors such as Bigenho (2002), Albó (1987a), Albó and Barnadas (1985) or Rivera Cusicanqui (2010b) are important contributions, but they are just one among many other stories also being told. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the myth of the first encounter between the two alien societies of Europe and the Andes limits our capacity to see and understand the motivation behind the human behaviour during the colonial era. Peter Gose (2001) calls this the ‘myth of the encounter.’



Lo que me interesa de estos términos “raciales” es que evocan un punto en la historia cuando hubiese sido posible delinear linderos biológicos y culturales bien claros, es decir, el momento de la conquista española. El vocabulario “racial” sugiere que un encuentro primordial entre el Español y el Indio sigue hasta hoy, y utiliza esta imagen de la conquista como vehículo mítico para ayudar en la conformación de las relaciones sociales modernas. Esto es un fenómeno que yo, junto a Peter Gow (comunicación personal), llamo “el mito de la conquista”.<sup>147</sup> (Gose 2001, 18)

But not only does it racialise the categories of indigenous, *mestizo* and *criollo*, by setting the origins within the particular context of conquest and colonisation, but a particular relation of power and violence of coloniser against colonised is also evoked and perpetuated. The indigenous are already, from the beginning, victimised, set within an unequal relation of power. But also particular identities are silently accepted. Bigenho (2002, 3) again provides us with a good example when she affirms in the quote above that: “indigenous peoples of Bolivia have been forced into interaction with Spanish colonialism[.]” Colonisation and colonialism thus become a story of European entrepreneurship and agency, against which the native populations could only react to. Perpetuating the idea of the indigenous as passive entities, which were it not for the external (European) agency would still live in isolation. By extension, if our assumption is that isolation is a core aspect of indigeneity then it follows that any external influence can only appear to endanger its integrity. As a result, any type of action by the Indigenous peoples is either rendered invisible or easily depicted as a reaction to the conditions of conquest and colonisation. In the remaining section of this chapter, I want to further problematize the assumptions made in these type arguments on migration and cultural assimilation in order to open up spaces where alternative narratives can emerge.

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<sup>147</sup> What interests me about these “racial” terms is that they evoke a point in history when it would have been possible to outline very clear biological and cultural boundaries, i.e., the time of the Spanish conquest. The “racial” vocabulary suggests that a primordial meeting between the Spanish and the Indian continues to this day, and uses the image of the conquest as a mythical vehicle to help in shaping modern social relations. This is a phenomenon that I, along with Peter Gow (personal communication), call “the myth of conquest.” (My translation)

#### 4.5. Migration and cultural heritage

As the work of Ramírez (1998), Murra (1984) Saignes (1995, 2015a), Cook (1990), Evans (1990) or Ari-Chachaki (2014) among many other shows, the reasons and motivations people had to move from one place to another in the Andes were plenty. More generally the societies the Spanish encountered in the 1540s in the Andean region had deeply ingrained practices of migration.

The practice of migration is deeply rooted in Andean history. The cyclical displacements, or “pendular” migrations, between the different zones of the ecosystem, whose length varied according to the region and the type of activity (crop cultivation, harvest, pasture, or mining), assumed different forms and meanings according to whether the dominant political system was tribal, imperial, or colonial. (Saignes 1995, 171)

Colonial migrants followed internal logics as much as responded to external pressures by external powers such as the Incas and later the Spanish lords.. Some of these were individually motivated, others were part of grander schemes to secure goods, revenue and resources within the different ecological floors of the Andes. In the same way, the reception of migrants was diverse and responded to larger pre-existing processes within which each region found itself. Migration also provided the opportunity for renewal and regeneration. Communities like Tiquipaya continued to appear in the census, and did not disappear, managing to even grow in population during the eighteenth century. They were capable of mitigating their loss in the population with *forasteros* from other regions.

In Tiquipaya (Cochabamba) “there were more than 230 widows and more than 100 old spinsters, and only eleven male Indians and four church cantors.” In the towns of the mita, there was evidence of “women obliged to occupy the posts of mayors [alcaldesas] and [regidoras] and to take turns in serving the tambo.” [...] These civil and economic responsibilities exercised by women to enable the community to reproduce can be seen as a return to pre-Hispanic practices where women performed similar duties. However, women were also the agents of change. They played a vital role in the

conversion of their sons to the status of *yanaconas* and, also importantly, accepted migrants as husbands, thus enabling them to integrate into the *ayllu* through marriage. (Saignes 1995, 185)

Here, Saignes quoting German Tjarks (1960) shows how people built their strategies of survival around migration. *Forasteros* were integrated into the communities they moved to, helped pay the salary of the priest and other tributes, and even replaced the missing labour. They married into the local families, and fostered kinship links with their native communities. Thus to present migrants as an isolated and atomised class risks to obscure practices of inclusion and community building that allowed individuals to integrate into their communities. Stories on the impact of *forasteros* on communities and their participation in shaping local markets or their involvement in patron saint festivals like *San Miguel* in Tiquipaya remain understudied. As Saignes (1995, 189) further affirms, how we understand migration within Andean colonial society conditions the way we can conceive social transformation under colonial rule:

In reality, beyond those tens of thousands of migratory journeys crisscrossing the vast expanse of the central southern Andes between coast and forest, between the Titicaca basin and the gorge of Humahuaca, what the Aymara-, Puquina-, and Quechua-speaking households were experiencing was a true social and cultural revolution. Like any process of real change, it occurred silently, unnoticed either by the actors themselves or by the observers of the colonial world, for all the concern over the phenomenon of migration itself. The commonly used concepts of acculturation and counter acculturation are not adequate to express the enormity of this social change between the time of Toledo and the great epidemic of 1719-1720. For lack of more precise terminology, we can call the new, profoundly mestizo social order “colonial Andean”. It was a revolution paid for with a high price of dislocation, violence, and disorder and between women and men. But it resulted in the creation of a new society, fundamentally different from both the old hierarchical order and Spanish models. (Saignes 1995, 192)

In this sense, we have to ask questions such as why did people migrate? Can we just assume that it was always in desperate situations as it is often suggested within the *mestizaje* debates? Did people only migrate as individuals or might there have been

more communal decision making processes informing these decisions? What did these migrants take with them? What kind of cultural, religious and social practices did they continue to take care of? Into what kind of communities did the migrants move into? How were they received in these communities? It is not the purpose of this dissertation to seek for answers to all these questions, but contribute to problematize existing narratives in order to find within its cracks what has been silenced and obscured?

The implications of these large migrations flows are highly contested. Saignes (1985, 1995, 2015a) argues against mainstream narratives that claim that migration had a crumbling and disintegrating effect on indigenous identities, cultures (and communities), as migration had altered social and cultural practices. However, Saignes' work shows that the consequences of this migration are nuanced and diversified. As with simplistic depiction of the conquest, we are looking at a more complex and diversified situation. Saignes calls into question the widely affirmed assumption that *yanaconas* or *forasteros* completely lost contact with their communities. Rather, he develops a more nuanced picture where *forasteros* continued to maintain links over several generations with their communities, contributing with money and working hours to pay off the tributes. Even though migration might have brought a cultural and social alienation in some cases, it cannot be assumed that this was always the case. The evidence put forward suggests that social and kinship ties remained intact over several generations. In other words, becoming a *yanacona* or *forastero* in the eyes of the Spanish administrators did not necessarily imply a process of hispanisation (or even *mestizaje*) or acculturation as is often assumed.

Saignes' work forces us to revisit our assumptions of loss, which are based on particular conceptions of identity construction and territorial organisations, where identities and cultural belongings are bounded within particular territories. But as John Murra (1968, 1981, 1984) suggests, Andean cultures such as the Aymara were mostly organised in what he calls 'extensive networks of vertical archipelagos'; Andean ayllus organised across different ecological floors in order to create networks that would help them free themselves from the harsh and often unpredictable weather conditions of the highland plateau. But much more than being a pure organisational strategy, Murra argues that the vertical control also informed their world view. With their base set in the high plateaus of the Andes, many Aymara communities also 'were' interconnected with villages across the Andes sometimes

reaching from the Pacific coast to the subtropical Yungas over the valleys of Cochabamba. We can therefore not assume that identities were bounded to territory in the same way the Spanish conquistadors assumed. Notions of belonging and identity were probably constructed around different notions of space and time. As a result, to argue that migration necessarily implied a loss of identity is to superimpose a particular (European) conception of identity, based on particular understandings of sedentary ownership and territory that probably did not exist in the Andean context prior to the arrival of the conquistadors.

As we have seen, the conquest and colonial rule by the Spanish Empire was marked by ambivalence, insecurity and diversity. The diverse mechanisms of conquest and colonisation, but also a variety of different responses, and actions from the different societies and cultures around the Andes. Part of the colonial mechanism has been to write out and silence the multiplicity of voices and experiences that marked and shaped the colonial enterprise. In particular, the voices and experiences of the colonised and exploited have been silenced, their heterogeneity and ingenuity in the face of colonial violence and has been erased. Instead, particular monolithic and homogenising claims about Indigenous, colonials, rural communities have been constructed. But as we have seen above, and Florencia Mallon (1995, 11-12) brings it to the point:

Rural communities were never undifferentiated wholes but historically dynamic entities whose identities and lines of unity or division were constantly being negotiated. The discourses of gender and ethnicity combined and wove together a series of struggles and transformations. While there were periods of greater change or continuity, the creation and transformation of sociopolitical identities associated with the community were part of an open-ended process that never achieved closure.

If these apparently unchanging communal entities were historically contingent constructions, neither the colonial encounter nor the transaction to capitalism transformed a *tabula rasa*. Instead, colonialism, nationalism, and capitalism added new possibilities to an already dynamic and complex discursive field.

This is not to argue that there was no violence, or that colonisation did not have devastating effects on native populations. But by only highlighting the negative and

devastating effects of colonisation, one tends to bury the agency of the different agents involved in shaping the colonial machine. Furthermore by constructing our theoretical frameworks on the simplified dichotomies between coloniser and colonised, we risk limiting what we can understand as resistance and oppression. The categories of the Indigenous, *Mestizo* or *Criollo*, if understood in abstract or in straightforward terms, risk obscuring and hiding as much as they reveal.

#### 4.6. Stepping beside *mestizaje*

Back in Bruno Moqo on that 24th of November 2013, there were many stories to be told about the event and its participants. Was it a story of migration, that once again is changing the face of Andean society slowly from the inside? Is it a story of urbanisation processes, of rural community being forced to migrate in order to find better living conditions? Or are other market forces at stake here? How are these groups being integrated into the local societies? What is their relation to their communities? Do they return multiple times per year? Do they all live in villages like Tiquipaya or do they live in the new suburbs to the south? Have they also been integrated together with so many other new migrants from all over Bolivia? To answer these questions is far beyond the scope of this research project.

Tiquipaya or Montecillo are ideal-typical examples of *mestizo* villages, where the Catholic Church and a *mestizo* elite have controlled the village politics and economics over the past century. Yet we see vestiges of something different, something that cannot be understood within these dominant frameworks. The question is what kind of worlds, what kind of decolonial society remains possible, when we accept the conquest as a monolithic process? What kind of world can be worlded when our starting point is set at the moment of conquest? What kind of change is possible when we have a frame of reference that structurally favours the European and western influence over any other? In this sense what stories are being silenced when Indigenous cultures are depicted as vestiges of a long-forgotten past? This chapter's aim was to problematize the linearity and periodisation implicit to dominant conceptions of *mestizaje*.

In this sense perhaps we could discard the events on that football field in Bruno Moqo, as vestiges of a different world, a disappearing world, a different reality.

Within a modernisation discourse it might even be disregarded as something from the past. But what kind of relationalities, and connections would we lose in the process if we were to do this? As we have mentioned in this chapter, the movement of people is deeply embedded within the social practices of Andean societies. Be it temporary, mid-term or long term, to move around and inhabit different places has always been a resource which various communities would employ in order to survive and improve their living conditions. They would have brought with them their cultural, religious and social practices. In similar ways to the example of the football field. Perhaps like with *Kurmi* today, they would establish friendships and exchange experiences, and participate in each other's celebrations. Of course, this just might be a single story, but at no moment does it claim to want to represent a totality. It is undeniable that colonial interventions had a devastating effect on native populations, bringing misery, and suffering. But it is also important to show that communities found ways to survive, and to cope with the new situations they faced. The picture that is starting to emerge within the historiography is not one of the helpless colonial victims. Rather it is one full of dynamism, where people based on their belief systems and their observations make decisions, where the consequences of their actions are rarely immediately visible. What is emerging is a deeply relational world, where identities are co-constitutive, societies are porous and in constant transformation. Of course, I am not suggesting relations are free from social context or power relations. They are set within larger structures and conditions of possibility, as well as contexts of violence and inequalities. The conquest and colonisation thus create a particular set within which the relations between the native and the Spanish could grow and be articulated.

As Abercrombie (1998) and Ortner (1995) argue, it is not enough to analyse and deconstruct the position and voices of the 'others' or of the 'subaltern.' But we have to learn to engage with what this project has called 'worlds.' That is, ontological frameworks that inform the peoples' actions we want to write about. Following this idea the following chapter focuses on the *Fiesta Patronal* (patron saint festival), as an organising principle, as a religious manifestation, as a space for assimilation, and as site of political vindication and community building. But also as spaces where new leaderships are trained, alliances are forged and migrants are integrated.

## Chapter 5: Music, nation and patron saint festivals

The most important event for the *Kurmi* each year is the *Fiesta de San Miguel*, each year they invest most of their resources to host the four day celebration and prepare for the parade. Since their first participation in 1996 they have been able to establish themselves as one of the main attractions of the parade. As I have discussed in chapter 2 and 3 the participation with Andean autochthonous instruments and dances is part of an effort to affirm the historic presence and importance of the indigenous populations in the constitutions and maintenance of what Bolivia is today. In the process revealing the colonial and western-centric discourses and structures that continuously undermine and delegitimise the contributions made by the different indigenous peoples. In doing so, the groups are following a long tradition within Bolivian society that uses the platform of patron saint festivals and their parades as scenes from where to advance their own political and social ideas.

This chapter focuses on the patron saint festivals, the music and the dance as sites from where the different socio-political processes can be reassessed and questioned. By looking at patron saint festivals this chapter seeks to map the role music and dance have taken shaping Bolivian society and politics. In particular, this chapter explores how on one side the patron saint festivals with its music and dances have been instruments of marginalised sectors of Bolivian society to challenge the status quo, and affirm their political, social and cultural role within society. While also being sites of cultural and religious imposition, where Indigenous culture seems to be celebrated and represented, and yet Indigenous peoples remain systematically excluded and rendered invisible throughout the celebration.

Thus, this chapter explores the complexities that make the patron saint festivals today such interesting social phenomena to study. Drawing on insights from fieldwork during the *Fiesta de San Miguel* in Tiquipaya in 2013 and 2014, this chapter maps the different social, political and historical threads that have made the celebrations of the patron saints across Bolivia into such important events. On the two occasions I was able to participate, the festival in Tiquipaya included more than 35 different *fraternidades* (dancing fraternities) and *conjuntos* (groups), and around 1500 dancers and musicians participated during the processions on Saturday and Sunday. Despite the success and growth over the past couple of years, the patron



saint festival in Tiquipaya, it is dwarfed by the festivals such as *Urqupiña* in Quillacollo, the *Gran Poder* of La Paz or the Carnival of Oruro. As we will discuss further, these departmental and national festivals attract thousands of dancers and musicians and hundreds of thousands of spectators from all over Bolivia and the world, and millions of spectators on TV, every year.

As I will show in this chapter, we cannot just make sense of the success of these religious manifestations as testimonies of devotion and faith, as the church and other official institutions would want to make us believe. (Ramos Felix 2009, Lara Barrientos 2007) Rather, patron saint festivals together with their displays of music and dance have become the icons and images around which a 'new' inclusive and diverse Bolivian identity has been constructed. In this chapter I suggest that the dances, the music throughout the parades have made a common cultural identity tangible and experienceable. The streets have become the scenes where a diverse and cultural rich Bolivian society could be presented and celebrated.

This chapter looks at the different processes and events that have informed the growth and development of these festivals. I trace the different phases, from the colonial era through to the republic, and how they have changed over time in response to the wider social and political developments. This chapter first examines the development of patron saint festivals within a large historical context, by engaging with the archaeological and historical literature. From there in the third section I trace the development of the patron saint festivals within the twentieth century. The fourth and fifth sections look in particular at the social and political dimensions of the patron saint festivals throughout the twentieth century. In the last section I explore the present iterations of patron saint celebrations and the role they are playing in the construction of a common Bolivian identity. In doing so, the patron day festivals provide us with a unique insight into different social and political processes, in particular with regard to the articulation of marginal and excluded communities.

### **5.1. A patron saint festival in Tiquipaya**

As has become customary over the years, the village of Tiquipaya awoke transformed on the third Saturday of October of 2013 in expectation of its patron day festival.

The usually busy streets and sidewalks, full of cars, pedestrians and street vendors, were empty. Instead, the sidewalks were full of chairs, and some grandstands along the Avenida Reducto. The people walking around were mostly making sure everything was ready for the many spectators who would slowly make their way to the village (see Figure 17). However, every now and then you would see a dancer walking around in their costume, or a musician trotting away with his or her instrument. Street vendors were starting to settle in the street corners, firing up their mobile kitchens, or displaying their extensive collection of beverages, sweets and snacks.



Figure 17: The picture shows the still empty Avenida Reducto on the morning of Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2013, hours before the parade began. Photo taken by the author.

The patron saint festival involves the entire village in one way or another. Everywhere households seem to want to profit from the event. An economic evaluation of the event lies outside of the scope of this research, but during my stay in Tiquipaya I was able to observe that many of the inhabitants saw the festivals as an opportunity to generate some additional income and complement their main revenue by renting seats on the route of the procession, selling food and drinks or transforming their backyards into public toilets and parking spaces. As Marcelo Lara Barrientos (2011) asserts, even one the most important festivals in Bolivia, such as

the Carnival of Oruro there are very few and very incomplete economic evaluations. This is even more true for local patron day festivals such as the one in Tiquipaya. The growing number of patron saint festivals such as *Fiesta de San Miguel* attract an increasing number of spectators, dancers and musicians each year, creating a growing economy around the several thousand-people participating in the festival, bringing together all sorts of small and large retailers as well as companies from across Bolivia who see in these public events a way to sell their products and generate some sort of surplus.

In the two years I was able to attend the *fiesta* (2013 and 2014) together with the *Kurmi* in the frame of this research project, each time around 35 *fraternidades* and *conjuntos* participated with more than a thousand dancers and musicians performing on the streets of Tiquipaya through the processions on Saturday and Sunday. Over the course of the long weekend of the celebrations, the town is taken over by the festival; daily activities are completely suspended, the markets are closed, and the public transport lines run less regularly. Much has changed since the first time the *Kurmi* performed at San Miguel back in 1997; not only has the importance of the festivals grown economically, and in size, but its organisation has also become more professional over the years, closely following the framework set by the large celebrations of the Carnival of Oruro, and the patron saint festivals in La Paz and Quillacollo.

The festival generally starts to take visible control of the town in the month leading to the *fiesta*. In the evenings, a cacophony of music generated by the groups practising on the different roads of the town welcomes any visitors, transforming the roads and the main square of the village into the stages for their artistic performances. The closer the festival is, more people start to join the different practice sessions.

I had only just started my fieldwork when, through an acquaintance from my childhood in Tiquipaya and founding member of the *Kurmi*, I was invited to participate in a number of events and practice sessions with the group, providing me with an unexpected experience as a participant of the *fiesta* rather than a spectator. The *Kurmi* differentiate themselves in many regards from the majority of other fraternities and groups at the procession, most visibly by exclusively interpreting Andean autochthonous instruments and music, in an attempt to vindicate and promote the rich and diverse Andean cultural traditions (see chapter 3). However, the differences go beyond the choice of music or costumes; there are some

fundamental organisational distinctions. With the exception of the few groups who are still organised around a trade union, such as the *Diablada Sindicato de Transportistas Tiquipaya* (Diablada of the Transport Union of Tiquipaya), many groups are organised as associations or fraternities with monthly or annual fees for their members in order to cover their expenses over the year, such as the rent for the venue, food, drinks and most importantly for the fees for the brass band. Similarly to the case discussed by Goldstein (2004) later in this chapter, groups such as *the Morenada Central of Tiquipaya* and others are composed by people who migrated from the mining regions of Oruro or Potosí to the region over the course of recent decades. The *Kurmi*, on the other hand, with a core membership of about 20 people, have no membership fees. The necessary economic resources are mostly gathered through different paid performances at public and private events throughout the year, as well as the occasional prize money they get for participating in musical competitions. In particular, the *Kurmi* relies on all its members and their families coming together in the months prior to the festival to work in preparing everything from food to costumes in order to guarantee a successful *fiesta*. Being a relatively small group of people at the core of the group, they rely on their connections and friendships with other urban autochthonous music groups from the valleys of Cochabamba, but also crucially from all over the country, to bolster their numbers throughout the *entrada*. In doing so, the *Kurmi* established a wide network of reciprocity over the years, where the different groups would reach out to each other and provide support at each other's events. In many ways, over the years, this helped to lay the foundations for what would lead to the creation of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* in 2011. The continued nurturing of these relationships over the years allowed the groups to consolidate and formalise their networks of cooperation and support among the groups in Cochabamba.

The commitment by the *Kurmi* towards the patron saint festival became apparent to me after seeing the effort they put into the plot of land they were able to rent some five blocks away from the main square. The plot of land was rather underwhelming, with minimal infrastructure, and only two small toilets on one side as well as two small adobe cottages in the other. In the middle, there were three rudimentary structures with plastic roofs. Over the course of the week leading to the festival, the members of the *Kurmi* worked with friends and family to transform this plot of land

into a space capable of hosting dozens of people from Friday evening until Monday (see Figures 18 and 19).

As the day of the *fiesta* came closer, all the other groups intensified their training schedules. With the *Kurmi* headquarters prepared, the *Kurmi* also intensified their practices. The rehearsals were moved away from the plaza towards the new headquarters. In the last two weeks, the members of the *Kurmi* came together almost every evening to practice and polish the new melodies (see Figure 20), while the dancers would also rehearse their new step combinations on the side (see Figure 21). After I had been assisting over a couple of weeks in the different rehearsals and activities of the *Kurmi*, I was asked to enter the procession with them playing an instrument. As the *moseño* is one of the most difficult instruments to play, I decided to take up the *caja*, the percussion instrument that accompanied the *moseñada*. This was my first experience rehearsing and playing an Andean instrument; up until then I had only come to know this type of music by listening to groups like the *Kurmis*, or on records by famous groups such as Ayopayamanta and Luzmila Carpio among others.



Figure 18: Members of the *Kurmi* on the morning of the 14th October 2013 gathering together to continue the preparations of the venue for the Fiesta de San Miguel. Photo taken by the author.



Figure 19: The picture shows the venue all prepared and decorated for the celebrations on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2013. Photo taken by the author.





Figure 20 Members of the *Kurmi* playing *moseños* during the evening of practice on 17 October 2013, a couple of day before the *Fiesta de San Miguel*. Photo taken by the author.



Figure 21: The photography shows the *Kurmi* dancing on the Calle Cochabamba to the sound of the *moseños* during the *convite* the last big test for the different groups on the weekend prior to the *Fiesta de San Miguel*. Photo taken on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2013, courtesy of the *Kurmi*.





Figure 22: The picture shows the *tropas* of *moseños* being laid out on the floor as part of the ritual offering performed on the eve of the *Fiesta de San Miguel*, where the group invokes the support and inspiration of the local *Apus*. Photo taken on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 by the Author.



Figure 23: The *pasantes* of the Fiesta preparing the *mesa* for the ritual offering. Photo taken on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 by the Author.



With ten days to go on the Thursday 10 October, the *novena*<sup>148</sup> began. In Tiquipaya the novena is celebrated in honour of the three Archangels Michael, Rafael and Gabriel (popularly referred as *San Miguel*, *San Rafael*, *San Gabriel*) patrons of the church and village of Tiquipaya. For many people in the village this period marks the official beginning of the festivals, as from that day one event follows the next. In the two weeks preceding the festival, all the groups work hard polishing the last details of their choreographies, arranging the final details of their costumes and making sure everything is ready for the big event. Over the course of the week, streets and the main square are slowly taken over by street vendors, and a number of fairground activities are installed in the streets adjacent to the Plaza, attracting both young and old.

On Sunday the 13th of October, the last *convite* (get-together) took place, where the *Kurmi*, together with most groups, performed their dances and music along the route of the procession in preparation for the *fiesta* the following week. The *Kurmi* participated with around 26 musicians and 14 dancers (see Figure 21). Most groups participate in street clothes, although most of them make an effort to coordinate their clothes in order to differentiate themselves from the spectators, and the other groups. The richer groups participate in uniforms designed especially for the occasion. For this occasion, the number of spectators was small, as generally only the people of the village witness the spectacle.

From Friday 18<sup>th</sup> onwards, with the celebration of the last novena by the local priest, begins the celebrations of the Vespers. With it, the festive atmosphere completely takes over the streets, as many people visit the different headquarters of the different groups, where often celebrations have already begun, and food and drinks are served to the people present before giving way to the music and dance. Many groups also use the occasion to perform other rituals such as a *q'uwa* in order to ask the *Pachamama* for good fortune and success over the coming days. As part of their regular preparations for the feast, the members of the *Kurmi* gather at the entrance of the village in the little park that lies in between the two rivers of Tiquipaya, where a *q'uwa* is offered to the *Pachamama* and the local *Apu*s asking them to bless and inspire the instruments, the musicians and dancers as well to grant the group and the village

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<sup>148</sup> The Novena consists of nine masses held on nine consecutive days in the name of the Saint or Virgin Mary on the nine days leading to that patron saint festival.

a successful *fiesta*. In both figures 22 and 23 we can see the preparations for the ritual. In the first we see the instruments laid out in front of the musicians and dancers, while in the second we can see the preparation of the *mesa* that will later be put on the embers as an offering to the *Pachamama*, as well as to *tata San Miguel*, *tata San Gabriel* and *tata San Rafael*, asking for their blessing as well as strength and inspiration for the group and its members. While the offering is burning, all the people present are invited to follow the example of the *pasantes* and pour alcohol or *chicha* on all four corners of the *mesa*. To end this part of the ritual, we took up our instruments and played a couple of rounds of music<sup>149</sup> in a circle around the burning *q'uwa*.

Over the course of the Saturday morning, the route of the parade was covered with chairs and bleachers, transforming the village into a giant stage (see figure 17). As the hours went on the chairs and bleachers slowly started to fill as the spectators began to arrive in Tiquipaya. Mobile street vendors with baskets and little cars roam the streets, offering mostly cold beer as well as other snacks and sweets. Increasingly you start to see fully dressed dancers and musicians with their instruments walking towards the starting point on the outskirts of the town on the *Avenida Ecológica*. The *entrada* is led by the statues of the three archangels, Miguel, Rafael and Gabriel, together with the parish priest and local authorities, as well as departmental and local representatives. The parade takes the groups through the entire village ending in front of the church, where the statues of the three archangels are carefully set on a stage built in front of the church (see Figures 24 to 26). From here, they will greet and bless all the dancers and musicians at the end of their procession. The *entrada* on Saturday is thought of as the more serious, and more as a pilgrimage by the dancers, who are seen to dance in devotion to the patron saints. Many groups kneel down in prayer in front of the patron saints, asking for the blessing and support of the three archangels, while the priests walk through lines of dancers and musicians blessing them (see Figure 26). From there the groups dance their way back to their headquarters, where usually they are greeted with food and alcohol before the party begins with live music and large sound systems projecting the newest hits from Bolivia and around the world to the skies of Tiquipaya. Together with the *Kurmi* we

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<sup>149</sup> I am saying 'rounds' here for lack of a better expression. It is related to the way the songs are structured; as most songs can be played endlessly, one usually plays a couple of rounds of the song before having a break. A song usually is played for at least seven or eight minutes, sometimes even up to half an hour depending on the circumstances, the capacities of the musicians and the occasion.

danced and played our way back to the headquarters, where we were all greeted by the *pasantes* and invited a *tutuma* of *chicha* upon arrival. We continued playing for another half an hour or more while the guests started to arrive and fill the open field (see Figure 27). In the meantime, the sound system for the coming fiesta was being prepared for the music groups such as *Arawi* and *Sajra* who would perform until the early hours of the morning. Before the party started, the food that was prepared the previous day was distributed, along with *chicha* and *beer* to all the dancers and musicians. Despite having been playing and dancing since two in the afternoon, everyone continued dancing and drinking throughout the night.

On Sunday, the day of the *fiesta*, the procession begins after the morning mass at eleven. The procession on the second day generally has a lighter and less formal tone and is usually referred to as the *fiesta*. Whereas on Saturday a strong emphasis is put on discipline, and the precision of the dancers during the entire procession, on Sunday the emphasis is on having fun and showcasing ones dancing abilities, and most importantly for people to enjoy themselves. The celebrations end on Monday with the *Calvario* and the prize ceremony where a preselected jury declares the winners in different categories such as best choreography, best costumes, best musical performance etc.

Tiquipaya is not a particularly extraordinary case, nor an exception to the norm. Rather its patron saint festival is composed of many different layers, that when accumulated over the years and centuries has made the festivals into what they are today. The celebrations today as in the 1940s or during the colonial period are indicative of the social and political contexts they emerge from. I argue that the festivals bring out the different relations and connections that otherwise remain invisible. During those three days of public performances, we can see the different stories being played out, in each dance, in each ritual, with each personal story. For brief moments even the silenced voices and forgotten stories become audible for those who choose to listen.



Figure 24: Members of the *Kurmi* dancing on the Avenida Ecológica at the beginning of the main parade on Saturday 19 of October. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*.



Figure 25: The *Kurmi* dancing on the Avenida del Reducto on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2013. Picture courtesy of the *Kurmi*.





Figure 26: This picture shows the *Kurmi* dancing in the front, they are about to reach the church of Tiquipaya, that can be seen in the background, where priests will bless the dancers and musicians. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi* was taken on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2013.



Figure 27: The photo shows the *Kurmi* back at their venue playing a couple of rounds while the guest slowly arrived to the party. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi* was taken on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2013.

## 5.2. Positioning the patron saint festivals within the historical landscape

The importance of religious and ritual festivals among Andean cultures is well established within the literature (Corr 2003, Fourtané 2001, Gérard A 2010b, Harris 1982, Orta 2006, Platt 1987, Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011). Both colonial chronicler Inca Garcilaso de la Vega (1985) and Guaman Poma de Ayala (1980) throughout their testimonies repeatedly highlight the importance of feasts within Andean society. As Chicoine (2011, 436) writes: “In Inca times, copious amounts of food, often in the form of stews and roasts, were served to guests and followed by heavy drinking of beer, dancing, singing, and music.” Chicoine further suggests that the archaeological evidence in Huambacho in contemporary Peru indicates that food, alcohol, music and dancing were not just characteristic of feasts during the Inca period but were prominent in previous epochs.

Excavations at Huambacho allowed the recovery of significant amounts of remains of feasting and associated activities. The assemblage exhibits a strong emphasis on food and drink preparation and serving, music and other festive practices. (Chicoine 2011, 442)

There is a consensus among archaeological and anthropological studies on the social, political and economic importance of religious and ritual festivals, not just within the colonial era, but also before the arrival of the European invaders (Chicoine 2011, Estenssoro Fuchs 1992, Gutiérrez Usillos, Silverman 2004, Stanish 2001, Stobart 1996, 2002, 2010a, van den Berg 1990). As these studies suggest, social, economic and political relations were organised around an intricate festive calendar that in large part followed the different astrological and agricultural cycles across the different ecological floors of the Andes.

Archaeological evidence from earlier cultures, such as the Chimú, Moche, Recuay, Tiwanaku, Wanka, Wari, and possibly Chavín, suggests chicha production and feasting were important aspects of social relations and political power in some regions by perhaps the Early Horizon (900–200 B.C.). (Jennings 2005, 244)

Feasting, and with it, the consumption of large quantities of food and *chicha*, was part of a complex system of exchange and gifts. As Jennings suggests, it was a system that regulated and promoted collective labour within and across communities, and assured the maintenance of communal life within communities often living in

different ecological areas. To be able to sponsor large feasts in this sense seems to suggest the capacity of the authorities and the community to maintain a good life and the goodwill of the local deities.

Thus, for the use of the resources, the beer, banquets, and other ceremonies and festivals, and the exchange of gifts, the commoners produced a surplus that the curaca could use to fulfil his obligations, reinforce relationships, and build his reputation. [...]

The obligation between ruler and ruled was complementary and interdependent. The better the curaca's organization, coordination, and direction, the greater the productivity, the larger the surplus, the more abundant the feasts, the more frequent and higher the gifts, the higher the standard of living of the populace, and the larger the community. (Ramírez 1998, 21)

As Ramírez argues here the legitimacy of an authority was measured by the authorities' and the communities' ability to maintain a surplus, that then would be shown in the size of the offerings, as well as the beer and banquets offered during the different festivities and ceremonies. The festive activity thus served as the backbone of the political and social system. In this sense, Stanish (2001) suggests that this system based on reciprocity was key for the construction of large architectural structures despite the lack of a strong central State organisation. According to Jennings (2005, 242-243) the festive cycle helped maintain a complex social system based on exchange and reciprocity:

Reciprocity is the backbone of the traditional Andean economy. The most common form of exchange is delayed reciprocal labor exchange between members of a community. In these exchanges, the sponsor of an event is generally responsible for providing food and drink for invited laborers. However, in larger communal projects, or for work for the church or state, the sponsor is not obligated to repay these workers with his or, more rarely, her own labor at a later date. Instead, the host must throw a feast for his or her workforce as payment for their labor. If the sponsor fails to provide sufficient food and drink, the workers will not work as hard or may not work at all.

The different festivities thus did not just have the function of marking the different agricultural cycles, but rather provided opportunities where the reciprocal economy

between communities, their authorities and neighbours, as well as with the different divinities, animals and plants, could be nurtured, maintained, or even expanded. In this sense, the feasts and ritual ceremonies conjured up the very communal and reciprocal ties not just within society but between the spiritual, nature and human society. In this sense, the importance of the *fiestas* cannot be made by a single social function; in many ways they were essential in maintaining social order, as well as nurturing peaceful relation, with neighbouring villages and maintaining the balance between the divine and the human. As the case in the eighteenth century discussed by Platt (1987) shows, the *fiesta* has a deeply spiritual and religious dimension, perhaps best thought of as bridges connecting one cycle to other. Silverman (2004, 5) argues that for the Andean inhabitants, their surroundings were full of divinities (*huacas*, *waq'as*), full of life:

It was a world of huacas. It was gendered. It was based on social relations. And it was temporalized, with time and space/place being inseparably bound in a concept called pacha. The ancient Andean world was integrated by a well-articulated body of philosophical principles and values that were a continuous attempt to maintain balance, harmony, and equilibrium in the material, social, moral spheres of community life.

The *fiesta* was not just concerned with creating or maintaining a reciprocal network among humans, but it also aimed to pacify and gain the local divinities' benevolence. The festivals and ceremonies functioned like a hinge between the worlds. They were part of a series of activities the Andean inhabitant had to perform in order maintain or restore the much-desired equilibrium within the cyclical renewal of life. In this sense, festivities perhaps are better understood not just within functional terms but as instances that invoked, performed, or brought about that very moment when the different worlds were interconnected. This is perhaps made most evident in the music performed during these events. Chicoine (2011, 450) in this sense argues that the "importance of music enhanced the theatrical and sensorial aspects of feasts and helped in creating a mesmerizing experience in complement with food, drink, colourful clothing, and monumental art." Although there is no conclusive evidence, the archaeological evidence so far seems to suggest that in many parts of the Andes, music was a communal practice rather than an individual one. (Abercrombie 2016, Chicoine 2011, Céspedes Paz 2002, Gérard A 2010a, c, Sánchez C and Sanzetenea



R 2002, Sánchez Huaranga 2016) The idea is that music does more than just help to create a particular sensorial experience for the attendees; it helps bring about a particular sense of community through its communal practice. The relationship between the desired sonic aesthetic and the sense of community will be further explored in chapter 6.

The Spanish invasion of the Andes as discussed in the previous chapter, brought about a complex of process of exchange, acculturation and forced transformation of many different aspects of Andean societies. Religion and the festive calendar are no exceptions. The discussions around the characteristics and nature of the changes and transformations, as well as the continuities brought about by colonisation, particularly with regard to religion and ritual practices, are vast and contentious. For the moment it suffices to say that colonisation brought about a serious transformation of the religious beliefs and practices for many Andean communities, but it failed to erase Andean traditions and belief systems or render them irrelevant.

La música y el baile indígena planteaban a la sociedad colonial los límites que podía tener la aculturación, el riesgo que podía tener su presencia con su significado anterior, pero también el riesgo que podía significar su ausencia. Tal vez fuera posible que un pueblo sobreviviera sin cantar ni bailar; pero sobre todo era imposible mantener en paz a un pueblo al que se le prohibía cantar y bailar.<sup>150</sup>

(Estenssoro Fuchs 1992, 368)

As Estenssoro Fuchs suggests, music, dance and feasts presented the colonial powers with problems from the beginning. As a result, these practices provoked a series of responses over time. The colonial powers tried everything; they attempted to incorporate it, to prohibit it and even to ignore it. It is safe to say that if the goal was to acculturate the Andean people into Spanish culture, they did not succeed. Despite repeated and systematic attempts to erase and destroy Andean societies, culture and religious practices, they found ways to survive, innovate and adapt. The different religious practices, rituals and beliefs continued to develop and evolve within their own terms and systems of logic. The Andean festive calendar today is the result of

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<sup>150</sup> The indigenous music and dance revealed the limits of acculturation within colonial society; the risk their presence could have with their previous meanings, as well as the risks their absence could pose. It might have been possible that people could survive without singing nor dancing; but more importantly, it was impossible to maintain peace with a people who had been prohibited to sing and dance. (My translation)

different processes of overlaying, adaptation, cooptation and imposition, processes that characterised the colonial era in the Andes.

Desde el periodo colonial temprano y a partir de una compleja sobreposición de tradiciones hispánicas e indígenas se construyó una diversidad festiva compleja que continuamente reflejó las contradicciones, jerarquías y luchas simbólicas de la propia sociedad. En este sentido, fue la estructura de la propia cotidianidad colonial la que se ponía en escena en la fiesta a través del componente ritual y simbólico sobrecargado de este tipo de manifestaciones.<sup>151</sup> (Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011, 29)

Religious festivities have certainly been important social events throughout the colonial era. As Platt (1987, 173) affirms, “It is obvious from our evidence that elaborate mechanisms of ‘permanent evangelization’ have been institutionalized for centuries through the festive round of calendrical catechism organized by the colonial confraternities and their Republican derivations.” In other words, religious festivities were essential events where the content of the gospel was being conveyed to the parishioners through reenactments as well as dance and music. However, as Sánchez and Quispe (2011) remind us, these festive events were much more than just mechanisms of evangelisation. They were part of a highly ritualised system of legitimation and assertion of colonial power. The rituals and reenactments were packed with different layers of symbolism designed to affirm and consolidate the centrality of royal power and the Catholic church in the everyday lives of their participants and audiences. (Díaz A, Martínez S, and Ponce 2014) Nevertheless, the colonial and later republican elites always had conflicting attitudes towards religious festivities with a large indigenous participation. (Bridikhina 2007, Estenssoro Fuchs 1992, Robins 2009, Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011) While some saw in them as an opportunity to evangelise and civilise the indigenous population, many others saw in them a threat to social order; as sites that would promote vice and perhaps most importantly disobedience or even revolt. (Robins 2009)

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<sup>151</sup> From the early colonial period and starting from a complex superposition of Hispanic and indigenous traditions, a complex festive diversity was continually built, continually reflecting the contradictions, hierarchies and symbolic struggles of society itself. In this sense, it was the structure of daily colonial life itself that was put on stage at the fiesta through the overloaded ritual and symbolic component of such manifestations. (My translation)

In particular, patron saint festivities gained much importance within the Andean population. Even though the local populations were seemingly quick to embrace the 'new' festivities, they were seen with much concern by the colonial authorities, who always suspected the 'true' motives of the local population were to practice Andean religious practices. By the end of the colonial era, the *fiestas* were condemned, and attempts were made to forbid their celebration as sites of heresy, decadence and gluttony, and perhaps more importantly as sites of a native resurgence and anti-colonial sentiment. (Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011) Many high-ranking clerics and colonial officials quickly began to fear the great success of different religious festivities, particularly the patron saint festivities. They had gained large popularity in urban and semi-urban spaces among the colonial subjects. As Sinclair Thomson (2002) argues, the colonial official's fears of music and patron saint festivities grew particularly after the large Andean insurrections of Túpaj Katari and Túpaj Amaru in the late eighteenth century.

From an Indigenous perspective, it seems the religious festivities particularly gained popularity in light of the large migration waves which the colonial Andes went through, into spaces of internal social organisation and of integration. Saignes (1985, 1995) argues that these spaces were crucial in maintaining and guaranteeing the survival of many communities who had continuously lost members of their community for several reasons, while at the same time attracting new migrants.<sup>152</sup> The case of Tiquipaya that was touched upon in the previous chapter is indicative of this phenomenon. Being one of the *Pueblos Reales* in the valleys of Cochabamba, the town saw a drastic decline in population due to the establishment of the Toledo reforms. Villages like Tiquipaya must have developed strategies to counteract this exodus by successfully attracting and integrating the migrants who moved to the valleys throughout the colonial period. Saignes (1995) suggests that perhaps the religious festivals became sites of social and political integration. In particular, Saignes (1995) and others suggests the establishment of *cofradías* (religious confraternities) played a considerable role in the integration of the migrant population within local society. The *cofradías* were originally instituted in order help run the different parishes and served to promote the religiosity of the communities; their close ties to the local priests thus were part of an effort by the church to exert

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<sup>152</sup> This idea is developed in chapter 4 section 5.

more control over local populations. However, they also fulfilled other more mundane tasks, such as organising the different patron saint festivities, and looking after the church and the parishes lands. The elaborate system of rotational *cargos* (responsibilities and sponsorships) for the patron saint festivities implemented by the *cofradías* are seen as important institutions that allowed for a more institutionalised system of integration of the migrant population. (Díaz A, Martínez S, and Ponce 2014) By participating in a *cofradía*, the migrants were capable of integrating and gaining some sort of recognition within the community. Despite their close ties with the local parishes and priests, the *cofradías* were largely independent institutions driven and maintained by local initiatives. And even though their importance would decrease over the course of the nineteenth-century, Saignes is keen to the point out that the institution of the *cofradías* were instrumental in shaping the social, political and cultural landscape after the fall of the colonial empire:

In these annexes [new parishes throughout the puna and valleys, where migrants and natives lived side by side], which developed gradually into towns, new civic and religious institutions were promoted, town cabildos as well as the religious offices held in rotation by all members of the new communities to celebrate the festivals. (Saignes 1995, 188)

In this sense the patron saint festivals, together with the *cofradías* that were at the heart of the new parishes, were instrumental in accommodating and creating a new sense of community and belonging. As the *cofradías* disappeared, the cargo system became the foundation of the rotational system of governance for which Andeans are so prized today. (Turner 1997) In this sense, Saignes argues that the *cofradía* provided a structure that was used after the collapse of the colonial governing structure in the nineteenth century.

At the same time, new elites were promoted at the expense of the caciques. From this perspective, the cabildos, the *cofradías* and the *compadrazgo*—the three significant Cs of social change—became the key institutions around which a more contractual type of sociability between coresidents began to crystallize. The previous hierarchical basis of relationships was derived from vertical submission to the three Cs of colonial government: the clergy, the cacique, and the corregidor. This was partially replaced by a horizontal relationship of equal and

rotating access to a cycle of civic and religious responsibilities which legitimated peoples' incorporation in their new places of residence. (Saignes 1995, 188-189)

The works of Buechler (1970) or of Guilt and Whiteford (1974) further show how religious festivals continued to be important mediums of integration in the twentieth-century. In particular, Buechler's (1970) work indicates that the complex festive cycles provided urban and rural dwellers with a common "language with which to express social relations." (1970, 63) In other words, the system of sponsorship and patron saint festivities, with different dance fraternities and groups and the rotating *cargos*, were instrumental in providing access for many urban newcomers into the social, political and economic life of their neighbourhoods. Abercrombie (1998) similarly shows that to this day, the rotation of authorities is deeply related to the main religious festivals in *Ayllu K'ulta* of Oruro. The different "year-long religious roles of fiesta sponsors are alternated with the likewise annual authority posts—'cargos,' in local parlance[.]" (Abercrombie 1998, 81) The fiestas are part of a complex rotational sponsorship and cargo system.

Sin embargo, a largo plazo, los sistemas de 'elección' a los cargos del consejo del pueblo se fusionaron con las cofradías que también habían sido impuestas para organizar el culto a los santos, produciendo los sistemas político-rituales característicos de la mayor parte de la América Latina rural. Gracias a ellos, los 'indios' produjeron nuevas síntesis de conceptos cristianos y precolombinos de su propio origen, de la jerarquía social, y del cosmos. Al tomar elementos de ambas corrientes 'madres' -pero sin someterse a ninguna de ellas-, tales síntesis no pueden describirse como aculturaciones a formas españolas y cristianas, ya que llevan, en sus propios términos, una lucha antagonista en curso entre su sustrato cultural 'nativo' (contenido en deidades con lazos precolombinos), y las figuras civilizadoras de Cristo y la Virgen recientemente llegadas.<sup>153</sup> (Abercrombie 1992, 287)

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<sup>153</sup> In the long run, however, the systems of 'election' to the offices of the people's council merged with the cofradías that had also been imposed to organise the cult of the saints, producing the characteristic political-ritual systems of most of rural Latin America. Thanks to them, the 'Indians' produced a new synthesis of Christian and pre-Columbian concepts of social hierarchy, and of the cosmos of their own origin. By taking elements of both 'mother' currents—but without submitting to any of them—such syntheses cannot be described as acculturations to Spanish and Christian forms, since they carry, in

In as much as the *cofradías* helped the diffusion and consolidation of Christianity within Andean societies, as Abercrombie here suggests, because of their autonomy and grassroots organisation, they created a framework where different traditions and festive practices were brought together. As previously discussed, colonisation and the evangelisation of the different Andean societies was never a straight forward process. In the same way that the Spanish authorities struggled to impose their own way of life onto the local populations, so they also struggled to convert the populations into Christianity. Colonisation rather was the beginning of a, by now, more than 500-year-old dialogue through different means between different cultures and religious traditions. As Stern affirms, although Christianity seems to have set foot seemingly quickly within the Andes it appears to have done so within the terms and logic of the different Andean religious traditions.

The receptivity [of Christianity by the indigenous populations], however, was not necessarily Christianization as the priests and missionaries understood it. [...] Hispanic supernatural power, knowledge, and social relations did not necessarily imply abandonment of the ritual devotions, social obligations, and powers associated with the world of indigenous deities. From indigenous vantage points, Christianization implied not the substitution of one religious pantheon or framework for another, but a selective incorporation and redeployment of Christianity within a framework of indigenous understanding. (Stern 1993, xxxix-xl)

As a result of this process, on the one side, we have a story of colonial imposition, but there is also a story of reappropriation and reinterpretation of a belief system, giving birth to a Christianity that was changing and evolving away from what had been practised in Europe before Columbus' departure to the Americas in 1492. Colonisation was never a one-way process; rather, it changed both European and American societies forever. As a consequence, the missionary ideal of a complete evangelisation remained an unattainable goal. From the very beginning a sense of doubt and incompleteness has been cast on the evangelisation of the Andean population among the Spanish colonisers. (Estenssoro Fuchs 1992, Harris 2006,

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their own terms, an ongoing antagonistic struggle between their 'native' cultural substratum (contained in deities with pre-Columbian ties), and the civilizing figures of Christ and the Virgin recently arrived.

Orta 2006, Tassi 2013) A doubt that would be perpetuated and reaffirmed up until the present. Festivities with broad popular support, or that directly emerged within the local populations, were always seen with suspicion; their Christian devotion was often questioned.

The recurrent rebellion and indigenous uprisings throughout the colonial period were used to fuel the fears of an imminent indigenous uprising (Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011). For instance, great rebellions throughout the eighteenth-century were followed by reinvigorated efforts to contain and control the different festivities that were proliferating all across the Andes. The fear these festivals provoked in the colonial elites is further indication of the often delicate power relations that maintained the power of the colonial elites. Even though the different festivals were sites to perpetuate their economic, social and political power, they were also spaces of community building and of resistance where authorities could be challenged (Mills 1997, Quispe Escobar 2008, 2010, Robins 2009, Stern 1987, Thomson 2002). The doubt cast over the Christianity and devotion of the popular masses had, and continues to have, a double purpose; for one part, it allowed and continues to allow the elites and the clergy to limit and control popular religious festivals whilst also positioning them as the only 'legitimate' voices on questions of Christianity, civilisation and progress. At the same time, this doubt also presents the people as those lacking faith and civilisation. Yet regardless of the restrictions and bans, the *fiestas* were never actually completely eradicated; rather, they were constantly reinvented, adapted and transformed from below. As Lastra, Sherzer and Sherzer (2009) affirm for the patron saint festivals in Mexico:

The patron saint fiesta is a time for pleasure, eating, drinking, dancing, and praying. It provides an aesthetic enjoyment through an abundance of ceremonies, music, and processions. During the exuberant days of the fiesta the community, the people, and especially their saints are on display. In the words of a famous huapango player, the fiesta is an expression of the magic and the traditions of Mexico ("Mexico es magia y tradición"). The patron saint fiesta is a performative event that produces temporalities, sacred spaces, actors, and stories to remember.

The *fiestas* were and continue to be highly complex social events that are intricate parts of a wider economic, social and political context. They are events where the

community is reaffirmed and expanded, not only through the inclusion of the foreigner, but also through the practice of the music and the rituals. The festivities with their different rituals, ceremonies and performances are never fixed in form or content, but rather respond to and try to change the wider social debates within which they are situated.

The transformation of the patron saint festivities all across Bolivia are deeply intertwined with wider processes that have changed the ways in which people live their lives or see themselves and their culture. Through colonial and republican impositions and waves of migration and commerce, different festive traditions were exchanged and mixed together, until today it is very difficult, if not impossible, to speak of clear origins. I suggest we see the different festive traditions as dynamic parts within a wider dialogue and process that are going on between competing religious traditions, political ideologies and ways of living. Because of this, they are a perfect microcosm of society and social change. In this sense, the transition of patron day festivities from the urban fringes to the centre of the cities is worth a closer look, as it helps us understand many of the contradictions and conflicts that are part of the political reality today.

### **5.3. The rise of patron saint festivals in Bolivia**

Patron saint festivals today are almost omnipresent. As an article in the weekly magazine *La Revista* (Villa 2012) reported, in 2010 alone there were 1242 different patron day festivals celebrated across Bolivia, out of which 372 took place in the department of Cochabamba alone. As such, the image of dancing groups with their different costumes and masks has undoubtedly become an iconic image of Bolivian society in the twentieth and twenty-first century. Its music has become the soundtrack of this 'new' Bolivia and is now played throughout the year, with new records, music videos and bands emerging every year. Patron day festivals in Bolivia in general and *fraternidades* and *conjuntos* have shaped and provided an imagery to the social, political and economic transformations Bolivia has witnessed since the turn of the twentieth century. Today, the colourful *entradas* and their dancers, together with the brass bands, are not exclusive to religious celebrations; they have become an attraction across different celebrations both in rural and urban areas. Even though



by the end of the twentieth-century patron saint festivities would become fundamental parts around which Bolivian identity and self-understanding were constructed, these festivals were largely fringe events in the first half of the twentieth-century. They were often considered by the local and national elites to be a *backward* and *primitive* practice that was potentially dangerous – evoking the ‘*worst*’ vices in the population. (Himpele 2003, 223) Patron saint festivities were most popular in the poor and marginal neighbourhoods of the larger Andean cities of Bolivia.

At the turn of the century, the waves of rural migration to the urban centres and the celebrations of different patron saint festivals added to the already deep distrust and often hostile behaviour of the urban colonial elites towards those sectors of society. At the same time, as mentioned earlier, Buechler (1970) shows how these festivities created and maintained active networks of support and integration that helped people migrating to the urban centres establish contacts and opened up economic opportunities. Furthermore, Buechler (1970) argues that urban festivals shared many commonalities with their rural counterparts, making the integration and participation of migrants easier, as they were already familiar with the different ritual, festive and social practices. For him, the patron saint festivals thus provided a common symbolic and institutional framework constituted around structures of reciprocity and rotation that were familiar to many people migrating from the different Andean rural communities. Institutions such as the *pasantes* (also referred to as *prestes*, sponsorships of the festival) and the rotational cargo system were well established within the Andes and provided the foundations for the organisation of the urban *fiestas*. As Buechler (1970) observes, the cargo system not only was the basis for the institution of the *pasante* but also influenced the organisational structures of the different professional associations that emerged at the time.

Sponsorship obligations often accompany political office. Previous to 1953, community leaders were obliged to sponsor a dance group to represent their community at the fiesta in the county capital; today market leaders in La Paz must sponsor fiestas. Other fiestas sponsored by the commissioners are part of an annual cycle, hierarchically ordered according to the importance of the saints and the amount of expense involved. (Buechler 1970, 64)

Buechler suggests that the patron saint festivities not only helped migrants remain connected to their hometowns, but are best understood as parts of a complex network that work through economies of reciprocity. Exchanges articulated around festive practices linked both urban and rural communities from the beginning. Similarly, Mújica (2017) among others (Abercrombie 1992, Romero Flores 2007) argues that urban and rural areas are interconnected and cannot be understood as separate and contained realms; this is particularly clear as he demonstrates when analysing the different festive practices.

Authors like Borrás (1999), Guss (2006), Himpele (2003) or Albó and Preiswerk (1986) also are keen to highlight more of the political and social implications the patron saint festivals brought about. Their work shows how these festivities became powerful events where the disenfranchised sectors participated in constructing a counter-narrative around the dancers and musicians, as well as through the economic and social bonds it created. The resulting image was of a society that stood at odds with the image projected by ruling elites. Their work suggests that over the course of the twentieth-century patron saint festivities in general and the celebrations in Oruro, La Paz and Quillacollo opened up spaces where marginalised and silenced sectors of urban society were capable of presenting their own cultural heritage, traditions, history and sense of belonging. In doing so, they were able to resist the continued attempts to erase their history and culture, as well as their religious and social traditions. In this sense Borrás (1999, 217) concludes that:

Les *entradas* sont en ce sens une singulière revanche. C'est sur le terrain des musiques et des danses si décriées ou persécutées autrefois que se joue aujourd'hui un moment de l'histoire bolivienne. Elles confirment en cela l'importance des représentations symboliques, moyen d'expression privilégié des groupes sociaux marginalisés dans une société qui ne s'est pas encore libérée des rigidités coloniales.<sup>154</sup>

However, the success of the symbolic and discursive challenges described by Borrás here have to be understood in relation to the very physical challenge the *entradas* posed to the established elites, their power and their sense of control over the city.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> The *entradas* are in this sense a remarkable revenge. It is on the terrain of music and dances so decried and persecuted in the past that today a moment of Bolivian history is played. They confirm the importance of symbolic representations as a privileged means of expression of marginalised social groups in a society that has not yet liberated itself from colonial rigidities. (My translation)

<sup>155</sup> See also Torrico (2011).

As a growing number of the dancers, musicians, devotees and spectators poured in to the celebrations, the battles were not just over which route the dancers could take, but also over the spheres of influence the different actors could claim. Therefore, advancement of the *Gran Poder*, or of the Oruro Carnival, into the very cores of the city passing in front of the power structures of the elites was seen as an important sign challenging the hegemonic position. These physical intrusions into the heart of colonial power have to be seen alongside the economic success throughout the century of the different merchant and artisan sectors at the heart of the festivities. In other words, the very nature of the festivities, with its long procession cutting through the city and advancing towards the centres of power, the dancers and musicians, the *entradas*, were never just seen as symbolic challenges but as literal challenges and (re)conquests of the city by both the participants and the elites.

Some of the specificities of the *Gran Poder*'s history are, I think, noteworthy here, as they will help us better understand some of the complexities and discourses of patron saint festivals in the present. This celebration has its origins within the popular and quickly expanding migrant neighbourhood known as Chijini in La Paz at the beginning of the twentieth century. At that time, the haciendas near the city were slowly disappearing, opening up space for the people arriving from across the highland plateaus. The celebration revolves around a painting known as the *Señor Jesús del Gran Poder* (Lord Jesus of the Great Power) to which, over time, a series of miracles have been attributed. According to Guss (2006, 306) the painting "was part of a long and controversial tradition of images of the Holy Trinity." Banned by the Catholic church since 1904, the painting had been travelling around the city of La Paz before arriving in Chijini around 1915. According to Guss, the canvas of *Señor Jesús del Gran Poder* that arrived in Chijini was a representation of a three faced Jesus joined by four eyes.<sup>156</sup> Being displayed in different private homes, the painting gained a growing number of followers over time.

In either 1922 or 1923, no one is quite sure, a small celebration honouring the image occurred on the day of the Santísima Trinidad, and the fiesta was born.

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<sup>156</sup> The canvas was painted over by orders of the clergy in the 1930s in an attempt to gain control and reconcile the popular festivals with churches doctrines.

Chijini, still beyond the official city limits, was growing rapidly. [...] For the Aymara Indians flooding into this area, the Señor del Gran Poder was the perfect patron saint. He too was a new resident, displaced and marginalized just as they were. Eventually, their identities would become so intertwined that the neighbourhood itself would become known as the Zona del Gran Poder. Their relationship would also be the source of one of the greatest creative explosions the Andes has known. (Guss 2006, 308)

Here Guss provides an example of how patron saint festivals were instrumental in integrating the newly arriving populations into the urban context. The patron saint festival provided more than a spiritual support; they presented the participants with many different social, political and economic opportunities and networks, becoming a space where a new community and identity was slowly forged. As a consequence, urban patron saint festivities were characterised by their flexibility and capacity to include and adopt different traditions. As Guss suggests, the festivities of *Gran Poder* emerged amidst adversity from part of the clergy and the urban elites. From its origins, the doubt and scepticism amongst many commentators over an alleged hidden pagan tradition or of an incomplete or even failed evangelisation hung over the festivities. The fundamental question that was raised was whether the veneration of a three faced representation of Jesus could be considered Christian or there was something else at play, casting a constant shadow of suspicion over the 'real' devotion and intentions by people celebrating on the streets, not just during the celebrations but in their daily lives as well. As we have discussed in chapter 2 and 4 this fear and the constant doubt over the colonised devotion, citizenship and humanity by the colonial and republican elites has been a mark of the past 500 years of colonisation and has followed the development of patron saint festivities in the Andes—in particular, events that did not find their beginning within structures of colonial and republican power, such as the *Gran Poder*. Rather, the elites saw in the large and often, for them, seemingly chaotic scenes the confirmation of clandestine pagan worship, predicating anti-colonial rhetoric and violence amongst the indigenous population. Both provided the basis for their attempts to control and contain popular manifestations, but also revealed their fears of losing their hegemonic positions. (Romero Flores 2015, Stern 1993)

From the beginning, the celebration of *Señor Jesús del Gran Poder* was defined by the social, political and economic vindications of a marginalised social class in a context of systematic oppression and racial discrimination. (Himpele 2003) But the growth of the festival also came hand in hand with the growing urbanisation and increased economic, political and social importance of these urban Aymara communities, and in this sense also raising the stakes for the elites who suddenly were starting to see this neighbourhood's economic success as a threat to their hegemonic position. The rise of the *Gran Poder* in this sense came hand in hand with the growing economic and political power of the Chijini population, who saw through the festivals a way to assert themselves as legitimate members of society and the city of La Paz (Albó and Preiswerk 1986, Himpele 2003). As Guss' (2006) observes, the beginning of the *Gran Poder* were rather humble, and he describes the entrance of musicians and dancers during the 1920s in a similar manner to Lara Barrientos' (2007) account of the festivities in Oruro:

It was now large enough to warrant a detail of 200 police officers although the largest activity was still not the organized procession of dance fraternities known as the *entrada*. It began instead with a soccer tournament and ended in the evening with fireworks. In between, different dance troupes would pass through the streets at random, each parading in front of the chapel to pay homage to the Señor del Gran Poder. These early groups were relatively small, composed of the humblest members of the community. The *Cebollitas* or "Little Onions," for example, credited with being one of the first groups, was made up of newspaper sellers. They wore ponchos and danced with pan-flutes known as *zampoñas* not unlike a procession in a small indigenous village. The *Choclos* or "Ears of Corn" were another early group who performed a dance known as the *Suri Sikuri*. This dramatic dance, which some claim pre-dates the Christian era, originated from an ostrich-hunting ritual. (Guss 2006, 310-311)

The accounts brought forward by Lara Barrientos (2007) or Beltrán Heredia (2004, 68) recount similar wind instruments made of some type of bamboo or wood accompanying the dancers. In contrast to the well-choreographed and synchronised dances of the present, the dancers rather would dance alone or in groups of two or three. It is only slowly during the 1930s and in particular in the 1940s that certain

groups would start to adopt more ‘militarised’ formations, in lines of three or four and devised in clearly identifiable blocks—each with their own choreographed and synchronised steps and figures—mimicking military parades. The other main transformation that further followed this trend towards a more ‘militarised’ performance came from the streets of Oruro where they introduced brass bands replacing the wooden and bamboo wind instruments. (Córdova Oviedo 2012, 120-126)

Furthermore, the groups participating were often organised around what Guss called the ‘humblest members of the community.’ And so the music groups emerged around both neighbourhood inhabitants as well as a number of different professional associations such as newspaper sellers, embroiderers and loaders. (Albó and Preiswerk 1986, 79) Over the years the professional associations and trade unions remained an important organisational criterion for the different groups participating in the parade. But in line with the changing socio-economic development of the inhabitants of Chijini, in 1984 Albó and Preiswerk (1986, 79) identify several groups organised by artisans, merchants, butchers associations and drivers trade unions.<sup>157</sup>

As Himpele (2003) suggests, the festival has changed in light of the emergence of a successful Aymara middle class and bourgeoisie, who have found in the festivals a medium through which they could assert their growing economic and political power through displays of wealth and abundance in dances such as the Morenada with their expensive and detail-rich costumes. In this sense, Himpele (2003, 221) suggests that “the parade is both the substance and the expression of a [Aymara] bourgeois social movement claiming not only a right to difference and visibility in the city, but in a more complex way a right to their status and their marked cultural hybridity, which had always repulsed national elites even after they adopted the ideological synthesis of mestizaje.”

Particularities of the *Gran Poder* festivities are perhaps stronger than elsewhere due to the dynamics and context of La Paz; the story of the *Gran Poder* is one that is associated with the (re)conquest of the city by marginalised sectors of the city. A sector that, given its migrant ties, had and continues to have strong ties to the rural communities of the Andean highlands. It is a story of social, political and economic

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<sup>157</sup> Similar observations are made about the development of groups in Oruro by Abercrombie (1992), Córdova Oviedo (2012), Lara Barrientos (2011), Romero Flores (2007)

struggles; in this sense it is about who is taking control of what it means to be Bolivian. It is also a story of how colonial dichotomies between rural and urban, indigenous and non-indigenous identities are continuously reproduced and perpetuated. Even though the boundaries and differentiation between indigenous, non-indigenous and urban indigenous have to be understood in relative and contextual terms here, the Indigenous participation remained marginal, often only present as a representation, a depiction by the urban interpreters of the dances. As we have discussed throughout this chapter, patron saint festivities are never detached from the socio-political context they emerge from; as such, they are receptive to wider social processes and debates.

This story of (re)conquest is told and retold during every single *entrada* and performance both in Bolivia and abroad. The dances and their histories have become iconic of the sense of belonging together, but also of taking control of what it means to be Bolivian. The *Fiesta de San Miguel* of Tiquipaya is no exception. Its success and expansion are directly related and inspired by the festivities of *Urqupiña*, the *Virgen del Socavón* of Oruro and the *Gran Poder*. The success of the patron saint festival is deeply intertwined with other more political and social transformations. In the second half of this chapter, I will look more closely at the political forces driving and profiting from these transformations.

#### **5.4. Between contestation and perpetuation of colonial power**

The *entradas* (parades) by the *fraternidades* and *conjuntos* as the main attractions of the festivals only started to attract large numbers of spectators and dancers in the decades following the 1952 revolution. Lara Barrientos (2007, 39) in his book *Carnaval de Oruro: Visiones Oficiales y Alternativas* shows that, for example, in 1931 only five groups were identified by the local journals as participants during the Carnival in Oruro. Between 1941 and 1961 the number of groups Lara Barrientos (2007, 45) identified increased from nine in 1941 to sixteen in 1961. It is only really during the 1970s, up to the 1990s, that the number of *fraternidades* (fraternities), *conjuntos* (groups) and *comparsas* (bands) exploded and became a national phenomenon. As documented by Lara Barrientos (2007, 45) the number of groups participating continued to increase to twenty-four in 1971, thirty-nine in 1985 and forty-eight in

2000. According to the official program of 2015, the Carnival of Oruro saw 52 groups dance their way through the city. (Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore de Oruro 2015b) Not only did the number of different groups grow but also the number of dancers, and musicians increased exponentially from a couple of dozen dancers and musicians at the beginning of the century to several hundred dancers and musicians per group in the present. Ximena Córdova Oviedo (2014, 58) poignantly summarises this development when she writes:

Since its first records dating back to 1904, the Oruro Carnival has transformed from a humble urban indigenous parade—prohibited from entering Oruro’s main square owing to racial prejudice that discriminated against its indigenous roots—into a commodity for the nation. Local cultural and tourism authorities promote the Oruro Carnival globally as the ‘face of all Bolivians’ because the dances are taken to depict pre-Hispanic and legendary figures from different regions of the country.

The festivities of the *Gran Poder* and *Urkupiña* have gone through a similar transformation. They have moved from the margins of the urban spaces both physically and socially to become popular events with more than ten thousand dancers and musicians each and hundreds of thousands of spectators every year. (Guss 2006, Ramos Felix 2009) Even though the official narratives of the three largest patron saint festivities of *Virgen del Socavón* in Oruro, *Gran Poder* in La Paz or *Virgen de Urkupiña* of Quillacollo proclaim a millennial old history, the patron saint festivities we see today are the product of the twentieth century, with its particular context of urbanisation and systematised exploitation of the rural indigenous population by the republican elites in the aftermath of the collapse of the colonial empire. Throughout the first centenary of the republican era, cultural and religious practices that emerged within the context of the newly emerging migrant neighbourhoods in La Paz, Oruro or Cochabamba remained largely denigrated and marginalised by the governing elites. Moreover, this period was marked by a continuation and deepening of the colonial divide between a small economic and political elite and a large majority of the population categorised as ‘Indio’ that was seen as inferior and a nuisance to progress and modernity.

The testimonies collected by Ari Chachaki (2014) are particularly revealing in this regard. Through the biographies of four different Indigenous political activists at the



turn of the century Ari Chachaki provides us with a picture of a segregated society that institutionally, politically and economically marginalises and exploits rural and urban indigenous populations. In this society, how you dressed, where you worked and where you lived indicated the 'caste' you belonged to. Social mobility was difficult in this context but partially possible; through migration and economic success one was able to buy new clothes, and live in better neighbourhoods. But access to power and to the state institutions remained under the control of old landed and mining elites. Instead of integrating the population into the newly independent Republic, the elites did very little to overcome the colonial segregation, unless it suited their economic or political interests. (Rivera Cusicanqui 1986) As such, a series of bans were imposed in order to actively exclude the 'indigenous' looking population, bans that persisted deep into the twentieth century. The bans and restriction reached from not being allowed to use public transport to not being allowed to enter the main squares with what was considered to be traditional 'indigenous' clothes. Voting rights as mentioned in chapter 2 were restricted to men who possessed land titles and were able to read in Spanish. A series of tax reforms and land reforms were imposed in order to weaken rural agricultural communities and in order to secure and further the advantages enjoyed by the elites since the colonial period. This provoked a migration wave towards the urban centres, in particular of La Paz, Oruro and Cochabamba, as many communities were struggling to maintain control and ownership over their communal lands (Ari-Chachaki 2011, 2014).

It is in this context of segregation and racial discrimination that the parades for the patron saint festivities for the *Virgen del Socavón* in Oruro or the *Gran Poder* in La Paz emerge. Although we are talking of two explicitly urban and Catholic traditions, they were categorised by the elites as expressions of an 'Indian inferior culture,' characterised by its pagan undertones and unsophisticated, even 'savage', music, dances and costumes' (Abercrombie 1992, Guss 2006, Quispe Escobar 2010, Romero Flores 2015) At the same time, civic festivities together with a number of religious festivities such as Corpus Christi celebrations or the Carnival parade in La Paz were maintained and promoted as spectacles where the elites would display their political and economic power. (Guss 2006, Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011) As Wara Céspedes (1984, 222) writes:

Before the social revolution of 1952, indigenous music remained on the outskirts of the city, and when, on the occasion of a city fiesta, Aymaras would participate with their music and their dances, they were referred to as “la indiada” in the prejudicial perception of city people.

The new political project that emerged in the aftermath of the Chaco War (1932-1935) was fuelled by a new generation of politicians, indigenous people and trade union leaders dissatisfied with the rigid oligarchical state; they were keen to find new points of reference around which a ‘modern’ more ‘inclusive’ Bolivian identity could be constructed. In the years between 1935 and 1952 individuals and small groups of young men of the elite and the small bourgeoisie of Oruro started to get interested in the different religious and festive practices of the popular sectors of society. (Lara Barrientos 2007, Romero Flores 2013)

Fascinated by the masks, costumes and movements of the *Diablada*, so the story goes, they became friends and began to participate in the processions up to the *Virgen del Socavón* together with the *Diablada de los mañazos*. (Lara Barrientos 2007) Prior to that, the elites saw little value in the different popular festivities and processions; they were either seen as entertainment to be observed from the safety of their houses and balconies, or worse as remnants of a ‘backward and savage’ culture. The interest and curiosity of the different people’s cultures thus became for many researchers and urban musicians a mission to document and present to the rest of society the ‘origins/foundation’ of the nation’s cultural heritage. It is precisely within this context that, during the 1940s, the festivities and cultural expressions of the marginalised urban sectors and indigenous cultural traditions slowly became elevated from manifestations of an ‘inferior and backwards’ culture to the cornerstones of a ‘new national culture.’ Dances such as the *Diablada* or *Morenada* or the ensembles of *Sikuri de Italaque* were moved from the margins of cities and the rural villages to being displayed in front of the President and the urban elites, gaining popularity across Bolivian society (Abercrombie 1992), and eventually becoming cultural corner stones around which the new revolutionary ‘national’ project of 1952 was constructed.

As we have discussed in chapter 2, the independences in 1825 did not bring change for vast majority of the indigenous and rural populations. In Bolivia the same people and the same families took control over the newly born state. It soon became

apparent that the newly created Republic only created freedom and independence for some at the cost of others. More generally “[l]a cultura racista de la oligarquía de este país de indios se exacerbó con la república[.]”<sup>158</sup> (Zavaleta Mercado 2011a, 46) In other words, the ethnic tensions and segregation of society grew during the republican era. The idea of indigenous cultures and peoples as being backwards and obstacles to modernity were widely propagated ideas. As such all cultural manifestations emanating from the other side of the segregated society were immediately framed as being barbarous, savage and pre-modern.

In the aftermath of the Chaco War, there was a shift within some sectors of the elites. As Zavaleta Mercado (2011a) suggests, prior to the war there was no real notion of a Bolivian nationhood. For him, it was on the battlefields of the *Chaco* that the idea of Bolivia as a nation was born. It was there in the plains between Bolivia and Paraguay that the idea of a common Bolivian national identity (as we know it today) started to gain momentum. As he poetically describes: “Pues bien, fue en el Chaco, lugar sin vida, donde Bolivia fue a preguntar en qué consistía su vida.”<sup>159</sup> (Zavaleta Mercado 2011a, 37) Bolivia did not exist as a nation prior to 1932 for Zavaleta Mercado; it was a racially, culturally and economically segregated society. As Zavaleta Mercado argues, the republic that emerged out of the independence wars was one that was ruled and controlled by the creole elites; it did not encompass a larger nationalist project. The Bolivian State and its elites built their wealth and political power on their control over the mines and an internal agricultural market designed to support the extensive mining industry. As Zavaleta Mercado (2011a, 46) suggests, the early republican state was characterised by its lack of a common identity, lack of a nation. As in all other countries of South America, the early republican elites never really considered the populations they were governing as being fully developed human beings, and even less worthy of a full citizenship. Rivera Cusicanqui (1986, 17) brings it to the point when she writes:

Por un lado, la oligarquía encontró en sus relaciones con el indio el mayor límite a sus posibilidades de formular un discurso nacional, y optó por comprimir su espacio de interpelación política e ideológica a

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<sup>158</sup> “the racist culture of the oligarchy of this country was exacerbated with the republic. (My translation)

<sup>159</sup> “Well, it was in the Chaco, place without life, where Bolivia went on to ask of what its life was made of.” (My translation)

una estrecha minoría de doctores y letrados criollos que “se sentían dueños del país pero lo despreciaban”. La sociedad oligárquica se vió con ello imposibilitada de construir una imagen coherente de si misma y tendió a resolver la ambigüedad de sus relaciones con el territorio y la población del país echando mano a la dicotomía entre civilización y barbarie, que prolongaba el racismo colonial de la vieja casta dominante, añadiéndole un matiz más a tono con los tiempos.<sup>160</sup>

In other words, the situation in the wake of 1952 was one where there was a disconnect between the national project that was envisioned by the elites and the reality of the population living in the territory that they controlled. In the aftermath of the Chaco War, as mentioned earlier, there seems to have been a shift within some sectors of the elites. (Abercrombie 1992, Lara Barrientos 2007) Cultural manifestations such as the Carnival of Oruro embodied this supposedly common Bolivian identity, where both the colonisers and colonised cultural legacies were visible but remained safely stored in a pre-historic context.

As Córdova Oviedo (2014, 60) observes: “Prior to the 1940s, it [the Carnival celebration] (like many other urban and rural indigenous cultural expressions) had been practically invisible to non-participants.” However, with some of the transformations described earlier and the inclusion of members of the elites within the *Diablada* and other dances, these festivities started gaining more and more popularity within different social groups. Córdova Oviedo building on the work of Klein (2012) further suggests that:

[The] Festive practices in Oruro in the 1940s underwent forms of modernisation mirroring, to an extent, the political and cultural reconfiguration of the nation taking place during the same decade. In the lead-up to the 1952 Revolution, when the political ideology of national populism was implemented, the advent of managed uses of popular culture influenced the new nation-building project,

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<sup>160</sup> On the one hand, the oligarchy found in its relations with the Indian the greatest limit to its possibilities of formulating a national discourse, and opted to compress its space of political and ideological interpellation to a narrow minority of doctors and literary creoles who “felt themselves owners of the country they despised”. The oligarchic society was thus unable to construct a coherent image of itself and tended to resolve the ambiguity of their relations with the territory and the population of the country by taking advantage of the dichotomy between civilisation and barbarism, which prolonged the colonial racism of the old dominant caste, adding a tone more in line with the times. (My translation)

characterising the Carnival's dynamics from then on. (Córdova Oviedo 2014, 60)

In this sense, the patron saint festivities across Bolivia became the perfect symbols of the problems of a failing governing system, corrupted by its strong colonial roots. The festivals developed into a blueprint for the new *mestizo* nation to come, one that is visibly inspired and influenced by the pre-Colonial cultures, while at the same time detached enough from them in order to prevent connections with the present situation of the indigenous populations. The Andean traditions and influences were thus 'easily' detached from the indigenous political and social causes that lay at the heart of the revolutionary and decolonial potential of the urban patron saint festivities.

In Oruro, the rearrangement of systems of participation in the festivities, which started to open up to elite groups, worked alongside established class, racial and ethnic lines of social discrimination in which cholo or indigenous participants remained invisible. This process determined which practices and actors would enter national discourses, and which would remain excluded from official versions of the festivities, forging an 'economy of forgetting and remembering' in order to uphold the existing matrix of power relations. (Córdova Oviedo 2014, 61)

With the victory of popular sectors, the mining trade unions and the highland peasant movements during the Bolivian revolution of 1951 and 1952, and the defeat of the outward looking colonial elites, the task of creating a common Bolivian national identity became a key preoccupation of the post-revolutionary government. The victorious project that emerged out of the revolution, represented by the MNR (Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario), was centred on the creation of a homogenous national identity. Their aim was to create a society where the indigenous would eventually be assimilated and completely integrated into society, as part of a glorious past, a past that could be displayed in a museum. (Hurtado 1986) The institutions and policies created by the MNR were meant to assimilate the large Indigenous populations into the 'newly' born *mestizo* nation state. This approach meant that for the first time, the Bolivian State designed policies not only to culturally 'integrate' the Indigenous cultures into a common Bolivian pantheon but also to assimilate the Indigenous peoples into the political and economic system.

As Rivera Cusicanqui (1986, 19) points out, the nationalist project set out by the MNR was problematic as it continued to conceive the indigenous as a remnant of the past, which had to be overcome. Thus, the marginalisation and violence against the indigenous population and all those 'deemed' indigenous did not stop. The politics of assimilation introduced after 1952, whilst facilitating access to education, land and providing the opportunity to participate in the political system, also had the goal of bringing transformation, and 'making' the indigenous into 'citizens.' The aspiration of the MNR to integrate the indigenous populations was important for maintaining existing power relations. (Burman 2011, 46)

The 1952 revolution and its outcome are crucial for understanding the current political, economic, social and cultural context in Bolivia. The centrality of 1952 to current social and political processes lies in the nature of the revolution and the transformation it brought about. The revolution of 1952 represented that moment when the old colonial oligarchy made up of old colonial families (landed elite) and tin barons could no longer hold itself in power, and collapsed internally (ideologically) as well as externally (economically). But the meaning and the impact of the 1952 revolution went far beyond the replacement of a feudal elite with a new bourgeoisie (at least in its aspirations). Rather, it pushed towards a question of identity, of what it meant to be Bolivian across society and the cultural field. (Abercrombie 1992, Albro 2010b, Zavaleta Mercado 2011a, b, c)

Goldstein's (2006, 1997) account in this regard reveals the connection between music, dance, patron saint festivities and the constitution of a Bolivian nation. Studying the patron saint festival of *San Miguel* in Villa Hermoso and Villa Pagador, at the southern outskirts of the city of Cochabamba,<sup>161</sup> he documents how the festival grew and was drastically transformed from the 1980s onwards. As large numbers of migrants from the Andean highlands—and in particular from Oruro—moved into the neighbourhood, they brought along their dances and traditions, transforming the small patronal festival into an event with several dancing groups, and a growing number of spectators. The case Goldstein describes shows how in the second half of the twentieth-century patron saint festivities transformed once again. In the 1970s and 80s, as a direct consequence of the privatisation of the mining industry and the

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<sup>161</sup> See also the research by Guillet and Whiteford's (1974) who identify similar processes in the village of Omereque in the south of the department of Cochabamba.

neoliberalization of the economy, the major cities of Bolivia such as La Paz, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz and El Alto saw themselves confronted with a new wave of migrants looking for a new home. Unable to provide this migrant population with new living opportunities, many took their destinies into their own hands and began to construct illegal settlements on the outskirts of the different cities. Villa Pagador is a perfect example in this regard, as the neighbourhood was built illegally, mostly throughout the 1970s. Its inhabitants saw themselves excluded and marginalised from the rest of the city.

As a result of their illegal settlement, barrio residents found themselves barred from membership in the city, symbolized by their lack of basic infrastructure and services, and reflected in their lack of formal channels by which to express their grievances to city authorities. In this climate of illegality and exclusion, the *fiesta de San Miguel* began to take on more explicitly political significance. Barrio leaders and residents began a program of what might be called festive political persuasion: They began to deploy the *fiesta* as a mechanism to dramatize their belonging to the Bolivian nation, from which they felt unfairly excluded, and then used this belonging to make claims on the city and its representatives. As *orureños*, barrio residents asserted, they were not illegal settlers but, indeed, the owners and originators of Bolivia's national culture itself. (Goldstein 2006, 160)

Once again, as was the case at the beginning of the twentieth century, the patron saint festival became a site where exclusion and marginalisation were challenged. In the context of the 1970s and 80s, the goal was no longer to build a new national identity; rather, the festivities were already the banners of an urban, *mestizo* Bolivian identity. For many migrants, such as those in Villa Pagador and elsewhere, to participate in the patron day festivities showed their pertinence and foundational role in the creation of the modern Bolivian identity. In this sense, Goldstein (2006, 167) suggests that: "In Villa Pagador, people trade on the currency of national folklore to imagine publicly their collective selves through collective cultural performance. [...] The *fiesta de San Miguel* has a central role to play in the creation, reproduction, and public representation of Villa Pagador as particular kind of community on the margins of Cochabamba." The inhabitants used the patron saint festival to present themselves as bearers of Bolivian culture and a collective Bolivian national identity

that was born in the streets of Oruro, thus putting themselves at the heart of the national project that emerged out of the turmoil and dictatorships following the 1952 revolution. The case of Villa Pagador and the *Fiesta de San Miguel* shows nicely how the imageries produced in the *entradas* of Oruro and the *Gran Poder* in La Paz became the heart of the new collective sense of belonging as Bolivians. The *entradas* in a sense became sites where the very idea of what it means to be a Bolivian citizen was fought, together with the question of who gets to decide what Bolivian society should look like. (Rossells 2011)

The success of the patron saint festivities is deeply intertwined with other more political, economic and social transformations the country was going through. The new political project to emerge out of the revolution was centred around a deep demographic, economic and social transformation, and brought a consolidation of the cities as the driving forces of political and social life, and the centres of power and progress. One, therefore, can suggest that the success of the Carnival of Oruro and other patron saint festivities came partially because it enabled urban spaces to be presented as progressive and innovative, in opposition to a rural area that was portrayed as backwards, and inspirational at best. The urban patron saint festivities with their deep ties to the rural Andean life, customs and religious practices presented a perfect case for the new mestizo identity. (Abercrombie 1992) The festive practices were, as we will discuss in more detail below, constructed as Indigenous inspired, but still detached and distinct celebrations, that grew out of past indigenous practices and were capable of modernising and improving on them.

### **5.5. From revolution to cultural appropriation and cooptation**

The musical scene in Bolivia prior to 1960 was strongly influenced by Mexican, Argentinian or Brazilian music styles such as *Boleros*, *Cumbias*, *Rancheras*. This applies in particular to the emerging music industry. Cosme Lazarte, founder of a well-known group in the early 1960s called *Los Astros*, and before that in the late 1950 *Los Cinco Amigos*, recounts how the public used to whistle at them if they dared to play a *Cueca* or any other music considered to be popular and indigenous at the time. “Nosotros, hace 50 años, si cantábamos una cueca nos silbaban, no les gustaba en las ciudades las cuecas. Por la fuerza teníamos que dedicarnos a tocar música romántica,



boleros, cumbias, todas esas cosas.”<sup>162</sup> What the public wanted was the international music played in Sao Paolo, Buenos Aires, or even better, what was played in Europe’s big cities. He recalls how in those days no record company wanted to record a *huayño*, *cueca* or a *morenada*. Popular music that was played in the taverns or during the patron saint festivals was not deemed desirable. Society, and in particular the elites, were fixated with Europe, its art, music and books. As argued above, the oligarchy was trapped in a logic where they conceived themselves to be Europeans who had to live in a land full of Indios, and as such, they searched within foreign realities and cultural expressions for the foundations of their identities. These attitudes were reflected in the music they listened to.

It is only with the new political project that was consolidated between the 1950s and 1960s that one can observe an active effort from the state to strengthen a new common Bolivian identity encompassing all its citizens. While the oligarchical State of the first century of independence found in the indigenous and mestizo populations an insurmountable obstacle on its path to progress and modernity, the revolutionary government that emerged out of the 1952 revolution saw the inclusion and transformation of its indigenous population into ‘modern’ citizens as the only path to progress and modernity. In this new project, indigeneity was no longer incommensurable with the ‘modern’ Bolivian nation; rather, it was framed as its origin, its roots from which a new and distinct (unique) modern nation would emerge (see chapter 2). Looking at the work of the renowned ethnomusicologist and MNR’s department of Folklore director Julia Fortún, Ríos captures this modernising project at the heart of the 1952 national project

Department of Folklore director Julia Fortún, [...] justified the use of rural indigenous music for state ends with her assertion that collecting “folkloric materials” was a requisite step in the formation of a “genuine national culture”. Under the sway of the MNR’s modernist-nationalist ideology, she argued that careful study of local cultural traditions would enable Bolivians “to choose that which deserves by its usefulness and value to be incorporated into our modern way of life”. (Ríos 2010, 285)

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<sup>162</sup> Fifty years ago if we played a cueca, they would catcall, people didn’t like *cueca* in the cities. We had to devote ourselves to play romantic music, *boleros*, *cumberos*, all those things by force. (My translation) Interview with Cosme Lazarte, 18.10.2014.

In order to achieve this, the state embarked on a massive project of homogenisation through reforms of the educational system, mandatory military service, introducing national suffrage, as well as a state-funded promotion of 'national folklore' and other 'national' cultural expressions. This provided the path to a growing interest in the different cultural, musical and religious practices of the different Andean and Amazonian cultures and peoples, as an effort to register and discover the essence from which a common Bolivian identity could be constructed. In this context, a number of *peñas*<sup>163</sup> and musical festivals were created in order to promote and socialise the different cultural practices from across the country. Music, dance and religious festivities were seen as resources, as tools to be used and exploited in an effort to create a common identity, a nation.

This shift of perspective, from seeing music as part of a religious festival and inherent part of the ritual, towards an artistic or even aesthetic performance that is used to represent the social and cultural capabilities in front of an audience, was a significant step. In other words, music and dance were employed as part of a cultural offensive aiming to perform a nation, through the growing music industry and the growing urban population looking for entertainment (Albro 1998, Guss 2000, Mújica Angulo 2017, Rios 2010, 2012, Wara Céspedes 1984, 1993).

Music festivals such as those described by Fernández Coca (1994) were instrumental in redefining music as a commodity, part of a cultural and aesthetic practice deemed worthy because of the skills of the artists. As Mújica Angulo (2017, 40-46) suggests these festivals did not (and still do not) recognise or respect the particular contexts within which the different music styles and instruments were traditionally performed. As a result, they ended up isolating and decontextualizing the music from their 'original' and often ritualistic and festive context. This transformed the different music styles such as the *wayño* or *qhantu* of the Andean indigenous communities, as well as the music of the *morenadas* and *diabladas* of the urban patron saint festivals, into commodities for the general consumption through recordings and theatre performances (Wara Céspedes 1993).

It is this transformation which lay the foundations upon which Bolivian folklore gradually became the basis for a 'common' cultural past, upon which a new national identity could be forged; a national identity that was inclusive, and attempted to

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<sup>163</sup> Club, which sells food and beverages and also has every night live music acts

overcome the limited state project of the oligarchical elites and descendants of the Spanish empire. However, this identity was only capable of accepting indigenous cultures as a source of inspiration, not as equal members of the new common project. (Rios 2010, Wara Céspedes 1993)

In many ways the consolidation of a 'national folklore' with the help of the State best represents the transformation the government was looking for. As Ernesto Cavour, one of the most influential Bolivian musicians of the second half of the twentieth-century, remarks:

Ha sido un momento muy decisivo el comienzo de la década de los años sesenta.

La gente alienada de la ciudad comienza a conocer los diferentes matices de su música, danzas e instrumentos.<sup>164</sup> (Ernesto Cavour in (Fernández Coca 1994, 334)

To embrace the nationalist project, 'Bolivians' should no longer look outside for cultural inspiration; rather, *criollo* traditions that were very much entangled within the middle classes and working classes found their way into elite society as 'Bolivian folklore.' A national folklore emerged on the streets of the patron saint festivities and the concert halls, that saw the Indigenous and the popular sectors of society at best as the foundation of a new common distinct modern national identity that needed to be modernised, and in the worst case as the exotic addition that justified Bolivia's cultural singularity (Goldstein 2004, 136). As discussed previously, the political and social project of the MNR was not about including Indigenous and marginalised urban population as equals, but it aimed at their assimilation into a new State-led project of *mestizaje*, where they were to be slowly absorbed into a new 'modern' Bolivian national identity and culture. Indigenous cultural, religious practices in both rural and urban contexts became, for many mestizo and creole artists and intellectuals, a source of inspiration they felt called to improve upon. As discussed in the Introduction, this meant the transformation of Andean music and instruments not just from a ritual practice into a commodity, but also a change of the instrument itself in regards to tuning and the way the instruments are played. (Barragán Sandi 2002) These adaptations allowed the instruments to be played with *mestizo* string

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<sup>164</sup> The end to the 60s was a decisive moment.

The alienated people of the city began to learn the nuances of their music, dances and instruments. (My translation)

quartets. Alongside these processes, a new generation of urban musicians began to experiment with and introduce musical forms such as *huayños*, *bailecitos*, *cuecas*, *valsecitos*, together with traditionally Andean wind instruments into their repertoires of *boleros*, *vals*, *sambas* and string based bands. (Rios 2010, Wara Céspedes 1984, 1993) It also represents an era of great innovation of the dances and the music played during the patron saint festivities. From the 1960s up to the 1980s a series of new dances and musical styles are invented and introduced.

The different kinds of music groups representing new currents viewed in their innovative versions their view of what folklore music was supposed to represent: an affirmation of a Bolivian identity as a defence against a perceived outside cultural intrusion and colonialism as well as the recognition and legitimization of the peasant Aymara and Quechua music in the city, mediated in the realm of a new sound. (Wara Céspedes 1993, 56)

What changed between 1940 and 1970 was that, similar to the patron saint festivals, *música criolla* and *música autóctona* started to attract audiences beyond the classes and sectors they originate from. If we take the case of the *música autóctona* for example, this type of music has always been an intrinsic part of rural communities' social, religious and political life, and as such gets continuously practised within the frameworks of the cycles driven by the agricultural calendar, following an internal logic and necessity. It is between 1960 and 1970, as Ernesto Cavour said in the quote above, that people from the upcoming middle classes begin to pay more attention and became interested in these marginal and subaltern groups (in a Gramscian sense of the word) of society.

As such, I believe we have to think of the patron saint festivals as one of the sites where these discussions took and are taking place. This was especially true of a quickly growing merchant and artisan class who started to vindicate their rights and their own customs and ways of living, demanding political recognition. The patron saint festivals became places where they could make their claims and aspirations be seen and heard throughout Bolivia. These festivals then can also be seen as sites where newly emerging economic powers were manifesting themselves against the perceived discrimination and lack of access to the political scene. The elites' interest after 1952 in grounding a new Bolivian identity in these cultural manifestations was used, as we will see in the case below, as a way to advance the political and economic

demands of the popular sectors involved in maintaining and performing the main patron saint festivities. In other words, the festivities received a growing national recognition and valorisation, slowly becoming pillars of a common Bolivian (*mestizo*) identity, giving way to a new social group to make claims as being at the centre of Bolivian cultural and identitarian construction. (Lara Barrientos and Córdova Oviedo 2011, Orta 2006, Paerregaard 2010, Ramos Felix 2009, Romero Flores 2007, 2015) This process described so far is perhaps best showcased by looking at the Carnival of Oruro. The following section further explores these process of folklorisation and cooptation through the example of the folkloric dance of the *Tinku*, not to be confused with the ritual of the *tinku* practised across different Andean Indigenous communities.

## 5.6. (Re)Inventing tradition, the nation (re)imagined from the streets of Oruro

As previously stated, the parade in Oruro on Saturday and Sunday of Carnival is performed in devotion to the *Virgen del Socavón*, and these celebrations of Bolivian folklore are today among the most well-known *Entradas Folklóricas* in the South Andean region. No other festival has contributed more to this cultural phenomenon than the Carnival of Oruro. It has helped create a particular iconography of what Bolivian folklore and culture looks like, setting the standards for the dancing performances, music and costumes of the different dances. Furthermore, the Carnival of Oruro has set a standard at an organisational level, that all other patron saint festivities are trying to emulate.

In 2001, the Oruro Carnival was declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO<sup>165</sup> (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). For the week of the Carnival of Oruro, one could think it has become the capital of Bolivia, attracting visitors, public officials and celebrities, dancers, musicians, and spectators nationally as well as internationally. According to a Periodic Report submitted by the Plurinational State of Bolivia and published in 2014 by UNESCO and the ICH (Intangible Cultural Heritage), around 40,000

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<sup>165</sup> With the implementation of the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2008 the Carnival of Oruro was automatically featured in the *Intangible Cultural Heritage* List.

dancers and 10,000 musicians participate at the procession. (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2014) As the report further states, “52 groups and fraternities execute 18 different dance styles (obeying different cultural processes) for about 20 continuous hours dancing in the parade circuit in the presence of more than 400,000 spectators from all over the world.” (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2014) The carnival route cuts the city in two, and all along the route bleachers are assembled for the visitors to see the different groups dance to the music of brass bands, with the exceptional handful of groups dancing to autochthonous instruments such as the *siku* or the *tarka*. The dancers parade in their ornate masks combined with matching costumes full of intricate details and figures. They dance through the streets in units, showing their dexterity and endurance with well-choreographed steps. On the stands the people celebrate the groups, encouraging them to present their best moves. The dancers and musicians, together with the spectators celebrating on the stands and the streets, have become common images advertising Bolivia as an exotic destination full of culture and tradition.

The festivities in Oruro have without a doubt served as a role model, setting not only the trend when it came to costumes and choreography, but also on an organisational level, not only in Bolivia but in the southern Andean region. Throughout the past six decades, patron saint parades have exponentially gained importance and are continuously growing. They have become important sites to display public Catholic devotion as well as being sites where regions’ patriotic sentiments are being displayed. As Córdoba-Oviedo (2014, 58) argues, the masks, dancers, brass bands, and colourful dancing groups are part of a national iconography that the Bolivian State and its population have employed as a representation of Bolivian cultural and social prowess:

Oruro has fulfilled this role [centre of Bolivian folklore] since 1970, when the city was named the ‘capital of folklore’ by presidential decree. Subsequently, the Carnival has become the focus of Bolivia’s official repertoire of memory and heritage; Bolivians look to the celebration as a way of remembering their past and traditions, and to locate a sense of national identity. The carnival has produced an iconography that expresses a common depiction of Bolivia’s rich cultural and historical heritage.

The iconography of the *entradas* have become exportable cultural goods that are displayed during international conferences, or at sporting events like the Dakar rallies. (Tiempos 2017) The groups and dances of the Oruro Carnival have become pictographic evidence of a unique Bolivian culture. Moreover, diaspora communities all around the globe continue the practice of the dances in their countries of residence, bringing the costumes over from Bolivia, organising dancing groups and participating at the local carnival parades, as well as organising their patron saint festivities in their places of residence to celebrate their home cities' patron saints. These festivities celebrate a sense of belonging and pride among the dancers and the Bolivian spectators.<sup>166</sup> The parade, with all its colours, soundscapes and artistic expression, are presented by the organisers as the best example of what Bolivian Folklore and Bolivian Culture stands for. The carnival in this iteration is seen as an expression of Bolivia's cultural, historical, and diverse social heritage.

The Carnival is generally seen to represent Oruro Carnival as an ongoing cultural process that has unfolded over 200 years, and it is characterised by a high degree of interculturality and intangibility. It takes place in a layered cultural site, shaped by the accumulation and selection of various cultural expressions over time. (Córdova Oviedo 2014, 63)

Many of the dances presented during these events, as a result, aim to reproduce particular events in history such as the conquest, like the dance of *Inkas*, the slave labour in the mines the *Morenada* and the *Diablada*. They may also represent different indigenous cultures through dances such as the *Tobas* or *Phujllay*. Abercrombie (1992) further argued in his seminal article on the Carnival of Oruro that during the 1970s and 1980s a number of dances appeared that claim to be 'ethnographically realistic' representations of specific religious festivities, its dances and ritual practices. Dances such as the *Tinku*, the *Potos*, the *Suri Sikuri* or the *Phujllay* fall into this category. They claim to be more directly 'inspired by/related to' particular religious and agricultural festivities. But as we will discuss through the example of the dance of the *Tinku*, these urban dances are better understood as urban reinterpretations or perhaps even reimaginings of a particular 'reality out there.'

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<sup>166</sup> There is a growing literature on this phenomenon, analysing the different manifestations as well as economic and social implications. See for instance the works of Barelli (2011, 2013), Bigenho (1999, 2002), Cámara De Landa (2005), Goldstein (1998), Guzmán (2006) or Paerregaard (2010).

As such, they are part of a process led by the inhabitants of poor urban neighbourhoods trying to reinvent themselves within the dominant constructions of *mestizaje* and modernity.

### 5.6.1. Between representation and folklorisation

The dance of the *Tinku* was first brought forward in 1981 at the carnival parade of Oruro (Sigl and Mendoza Salazar 2012a, 280). The A.C.F.O. (Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore de Oruro), the main governing bodies of the carnival parade, describes the folkloric dance of the *Tinku* in the following manner:

La danza del Tinku es un acto cultural propio del área rural altiplánica [...].

A principios de la década del 80 [unos jóvenes de las barriadas orureñas] quisieron transmitir de una manera artística [...] el “Encuentro” o “Pelea” entre comunarios [...] De ahí que los danzarines del Tinku, hace (sic) gala de saltos, brincos, puñetazos y patadas al ficticio oponente.<sup>167</sup> (Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore de Oruro 2015a)

The dance of the *Tinku* is presented as an ‘artistic representation’ of the religious and ritual traditions and encounters practised in Macha, a locality in the north of the department of Potosí that are also known as *tinku*. The *Tinku* dancer who enters the streets of Oruro not only adopts many of the distinctive clothing elements generally associated with the region of Macha and are often exhibited during the ritual fights performed during the festive practices of the *Señor de la Vera Cruz* on the 3rd of May, but as Abercrombie (1992, 289) argues, they incorporate and overemphasises the ‘ferocious’ elements of the fight and seemingly ‘savage’ elements of the ritual battles that take place during the religious festival. This leaves out the complex ritual,

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<sup>167</sup> The dance of the Tinku is an actual cultural act of the rural Andean highlands [...]. In the early 80s [young peoples from the poor neighborhoods of Oruro] wanted to convey artistically, [...] the ‘Encounter’ or ‘Fight’ between comunarios [...] From there the Tinku dancers show jumps, throw punches and kicks to a fictitious opponent. (My translation)



religious and political<sup>168</sup> context of which the *Tinku* is an intricate part in places like Macha.

The ritual of the *tinku* is a ritual encounter/fights performed most famously during the festive practices of the Señor de la Vera Cruz on the 3rd of May, in the north of the department of Potosí. This is a celebration and ritual practice that takes place in the locality of Macha, where different communities from across the region meet for the ritual of the *Tinku*. It is precisely these ritual fights that take place during the celebrations that made this festival famous. But the *tinku* ritual is not restricted to the Macha rather the celebration is deeply embedded within the Andean festive calendar around the various agricultural cycles. As Van Vleet (2010) writes *tinku* rituals are “part of an annual fiesta dedicated to a Catholic saint or celebrating a religious feast day.” Sigl and Mendoza Salazar (2012a, 717) similarly suggest, the “*Tinku* es parte de una fiesta ritual patronal religiosa y agrícola donde se realizan peleas cuerpo a cuerpo entre pares[.]”<sup>169</sup> As the authors further note, the ritual fights are just one part of the festivities. Platt (1987) describes in great detail how the *tinku* is part of a series of ritual practices and events that take place over a period of time, and has a particular spiritual, ritual and cosmic importance.<sup>170</sup>

As mentioned above, all these nuances are not reflected within the urban dance of the *Tinku*. Rather, the dance steps are marked by an overemphasis on fighting moves, seemingly inspired by different martial arts. The music, although similar to the *tonadas* of the north of Potosí, has been transformed and standardised in order to better suit the brass bands and its urban audiences. Today, without a doubt the dance of the *Tinku* has become one of the most popular and sought after types of music in the country. Moreover Sigl and Mendoza Salazar (2012a, 280-281) argue that although the dance costumes in its first iterations maintained some degree of resemblance with the clothes used during the ritual festivities in Macha, over the

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<sup>168</sup> Abercrombie’s (1998) book *Pathways of Memory and Power*, alongside the work of Platt (1987) and van den Berg (1990) among many others provide an in-depth account of the relationship between patron saint festivities, Andean rituals and the political organisation of Andean indigenous communities in Bolivia.

<sup>169</sup> *Tinku* is part of a patron saint religious and agricultural ritual festival, where body to body fights take place in pairs [.] (My translation)

<sup>170</sup> For more comprehensive accounts and description of the *tinku* ritual see Abercrombie (1992, 1996), Juan San (2002), Platt (1987), van den Berg (1990), Van Vleet (2010). Querejazu Escobari (2016b) is a good example how the concept is travelling across the social science; her paper is first attempt to see how the underlying logics of the *Tinku* can help us rethink the field of International Relations.

years the dance of the *Tinku* has developed its own characteristics. Without a doubt, one can still see certain resemblances, but the urban costumes today have evolved in their own direction.

The dances such as the *Tinku*, in this sense, are the result of an urban creative process that, in response to an emerging sense of national belonging by popular urban sectors during the 1970s and 80s, finds in the rural populations of Bolivia a source of inspiration from where they start to construct their own genealogy and sense of belonging. The dance of the *Tinku* in many ways disregards the particularities and nuances, and reduces the dance and outfit to stereotypical depictions of the cultures, the dances, and the people they claim to be representing. The dance remains at best close reinterpretations and reappropriations, and in the worst case an attempt to ridicule and denigrate the indigenous and peasant populations it claims to represent. The *Tinku* is just one case; similar claims of 'ethnographic realism' are made with regard to other popular dances at the Carnival parade of Oruro or of any other urban patron saint festival. (Abercrombie 1992)

The dances performed during the patron saint festivals combine the claims of a continuity dating to a pre-Columbian time, as well as claims of innovation and modernity. In this sense they follow Goldstein's definition of folklore mentioned in the second chapter; for him "[f]olklore at once refers to the expressive culture of the Latin American peasantry, its origins lost in the ancient past, and to the cultural traditions of the modern nation." (Goldstein 2004, 136) In this sense, the imagery that gets created on the streets of Oruro, La Paz or Cochabamba in the second half of the twentieth century is part of the vast nation building project that emerges in the middle of the twentieth century. As such, it reproduces the same shortcomings, in that the dances only present a partial picture of integration. Rather than vindicating or opening spaces for indigenous communities and cultural traditions to be expressed to the nation, the cultural manifestations of the *entradas* end up as a glorified but very much 'sanitised' representation of Indigeneity.

The indigenous are represented and confined within the construction of a collective *mestizo* national identity, perpetuating the MNR's vision a national subject who has indigenous roots but ultimately overcomes his or hers roots to become a modern liberal citizen. Indigeneity in this nation building framework is only useful as an abstract imagery, not as real political subjects with demands and their own political subjectivities. The representations by urban dwellers of indigenous traditions and

cultural expressions become the perfect vehicle to build this political project of assimilation (not integration) of the indigenous 'other.' The patron saint parades thus are part of the double negation that is, as I have discussed in more detail in chapter two, an essential component of the framework legitimising and perpetuating colonial structures of exclusion and oppression.

Discourses of the past in Oruro, although acknowledging the contribution of ancestral indigenous cultures, systematically reject any recent or contemporary contributions from indigenous actors. [...] [T]he process is called the 'Eclipse of the Indian', adapting Enrique Dussel's naming of the Conquest and the inauguration of modernity (the leading 'universalist' epistemology) as the 'Eclipse of the Other.'<sup>171</sup> The starting premise is that the lack of visibility of some key Carnival actors in the representative dimension of the festivity in national discourse stems from racialised notions of cultural heritage inherited from the colonial period. (Córdova Oviedo 2014, 59)

In other words, patron saint parades, whether the large ones in Oruro and La Paz, or the small one in Tiquipaya, are spaces where marginalised groups of society can assert their social and political relevance as shown throughout this chapter. But they have also become a site where the middle classes and a new bourgeoisie can display their economic and social capital, by displaying new and more expensive costumes', dancing to bigger and better brass bands, and hosting larger feasts and parties every year. (Abercrombie 1992, Córdova Oviedo 2012, Lara Barrientos 2011, Lecount 1999).

The parades have become sites where a modern national identity is reaffirmed. In this projection, the indigenous are relegated to the past. Indigeneity becomes a site of inspiration and appropriation which the urban elites were to able utilize to create a 'superior' and more sophisticated cultural expression. As such, many dances that have emerged in the last couple of decades are urban representations and often ridicule the indigenous. The indigenous, their clothes, their movements and traditions have been co-opted and transformed by the urban middle and upper classes in order to fit into their conceptions and frameworks of reference. (Córdova

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<sup>171</sup> This notion of the 'Eclipse of the Other' Córdova Oviedo takes up here is part of what I have been referring as the 'negation of the negation' earlier in this chapter and in the first chapter.

Oviedo 2014, Lara Barrientos 2007, Romero Flores 2007, 2013, Rossells 2011) In doing so, indigenous culture, ritual practices, dances and music are reduced to manageable identity markers, detached not just from their places of origin and people's traditions but also crucially from the political and economic context they emerged from, as the example of the dance of the *Tinku* clearly shows. But far from being a recent phenomenon associated with the neoliberal cultural politics of the 1990s, or even with the current governments' attempt to display diversity as a constitutive part of Bolivia's new Plurinational State (see chapter 1), the presence or lack of presence of the 'indigenous' has been a driving factor in the development of the Carnival and other patron saint festivities in Bolivia. This has cemented a project that ultimately sees assimilation and modernisation as the path forward for Bolivian society, where there is little or no space for the indigenous in general, and their struggle against discrimination and marginalisation in particular.

### **5.7. Patron saint festivals a site of many stories**

The experience of the patron saint festivals in many urban or semi-urban places has become very similar; the same music is played, the groups copy the newest steps and costumes from the big entradas of Oruro, La Paz or Quillacollo. Moreover, the big groups such as the *Morenada Central*, or the *Caporales San Simón* of Oruro have created branches not just in the different cities of Bolivia but abroad in the United States and Spain as well. The same bands tour the country playing in the different festivities to the highest bidders. Brass bands such as the famous *Banda Intercontinental Poopó* are now contracted by different groups across the country as a sign of their economic and cultural influence. Similar claims of belonging and national culture are expressed during the celebration by both local authorities, dancers and spectators, making these events stages where Bolivian common national identity and culture are performed and affirmed. While these festivals show a deep rooted devotion of the participants that is constantly reiterated and showcased, they are also always questioned, casting doubt over the devotion of the different participants. As we have seen, these concerns are nothing new; rather, they are continuations of discourses that have been around the patron saint festivities since their first iterations in the Andean region. From the constant concern and attacks to the excessive consumption

of alcohol and food, patron saint festivities also show a deep rooted and continuous distrust and perhaps even fear of certain sectors of society, in particular within the clergy and elites.

Similarly, the saint festivities in Tiquipaya very much present the spectator with a smaller version of the large *entrada*. The similarities not only are visible in the dances and the music played, but in the very way the patron saint festival is being organised. As with many other patron saint festivities, the *Fiesta de San Miguel* of Tiquipaya has adopted the organisational structure of the Carnival of Oruro; similar to the A.C.F.O., since 2002 Tiquipaya has the *Asociación de Fraternidades y Conjuntos Folklóricos-Autóctonos San Miguel de Tiquipaya* (Association of Folkloric-Autochthonous Fraternities and Groups San Miguel of Tiquipaya). As their name suggests, the association brings together the different groups and fraternities under one umbrella organisation, charged with the task of working together with local parish and the municipal government in order to organise and run the festival each year. Comparing both associations' organic statutes we can see that the organisation of Tiquipaya to a large extent copies the tasks and obligations of the A.C.F.O. (Asociación de Conjuntos del Folklore de Oruro 2013, Asociación de Fraternidades y Conjuntos Folklórico-Autóctonos San Miguel de Tiquipaya 2015). Similarly to the A.C.F.O., the umbrella organisation in Tiquipaya is seen as the guardian institution of the patron saint festival, responsible for promoting the faith, devotion towards the Patron Saints and the moral character of the festival among its affiliated members and the general public. But the association, similar to its counterpart, also serves as a sort of gatekeeper that determines the conduct of its members, regulating their religious behaviour as well as their performances through different mandatory requirements and penalties, forcing the groups and fraternities to behave in particular ways. In many ways it retains for itself the power to judge who is and who is not worthy of participating in the parade (Asociación de Fraternidades y Conjuntos Folklórico-Autóctonos San Miguel de Tiquipaya 2015). Patron saint festivities, the organisations that run them, the groups of dancers and the music bands all play a key role in what have become today dominant conceptions of Bolivian identity.

The aim of this chapter was not to provide an in-depth account of the festival in Tiquipaya; rather the goal was to try to understand how festivals like the one in Tiquipaya have become emblematic depictions of Bolivian culture and national

identity. In doing so the chapter problematizes depictions that see the *entradas* and patron saint festivities as instruments of (neo-)colonial expression as well as those that portray them as manifestations of anti-colonial resistance. In my view, both accounts miss the essence of these cultural phenomena. Patron saint festivals are never detached from the socio-political context they emerge from. As such they are receptive to wider social processes and debates. In this sense, they are contested spaces where different actors with often conflicting projects challenge each other. For this reason, there will never be a monolithic account of these festivities; there will always be multiple accounts, multiple actors that shape and condition these events.

As we have seen throughout this chapter, patron saint festivities in the Bolivian Andes are complex social, full of symbolism, traditions, and rituals. There is no single narrative of their origins, effects or meanings. But they are unique sites, in the sense that they are windows into a complex and intertwined social reality that otherwise is easily made invisible. The fiesta as social phenomena cannot be reduced or explained by classical frameworks that privilege ethnicity over class, or politics over economics. In this sense, Goldstein's (2006, 167) conclusions on patron saint festival in Cochabamba are telling:

Despite this importance, the fiesta is not uncritically received in the community, nor can it be understood as unproblematically reproducing the structure or organization of the community that practices it. Rather, the fiesta is a highly contested terrain, fraught with ambiguities and contradictions. For some it is an annual occasion for a bacchanalian release from the stresses of daily life; for others, the fiesta is a political instrument, conditionally tolerated because of its powerful role as producer and symbol of local collective identity. For the many evangelicals that reside in Villa Pagador, their commitments to the community-formation project in the barrio contradict their commitments to their faith, requiring them to conceal their condemnation of the fiesta and hence tacitly participate in the production of an idea of community predicated upon sin. The religious heterogeneity of Villa Pagador is disguised by a folkloric veneer, a spectacle produced, in part, for the consumption of others.

The issue raised is intriguing, and I believe emblematic for most approaches and analysis on Bolivia and popular cultural manifestations. Goldstein in this conclusion shows how the *fiesta* does not fit into the more romantic imaginary that sees in them tools of integration and community formation. Rather, as he observes, the *fiesta* is a site of contradictions, fractions, political contestations and the power structures that shape the relationships between the groups, and as such, it is revealing of the different groups that participate and are touched by it. As I have tried to demonstrate throughout this chapter, the patron saint festivals are an important dimension of people's lives. Explanations that focus too much on the religious devotion as well as those studies that see them as focuses of social and political resistance fall short in understanding the dynamics that are at the heart of these social events. The success of patron day festivals, I argue, has been their capacity to adapt and deal with difference. It is this difference that has been the motor for the social and cultural innovation that has emerged out of their celebrations. More generally speaking, the Andean *fiestas*, to me, are moments where difference is confronted, and imbalances can be addressed. In this, they do create a sort of unity, but it is not a unity because of homogeneity, but rather a unity within difference. The *fiestas* bring forth a creative chaos within which new cycles and new relations can be fostered, while at the same time old ones can be healed or amended.

## Chapter 6: Nurturing Music: Nurturing Andean Worlds

In the Andes nature and the chacras sing. There is music in the cornfield, in the water, in the trees. What the community or runas does when working in the field, hilling potato plants, in the harvest and in any other activity is to attune themselves with this music. Dance and fiesta are, so to speak, in the very heart of nature so that the executed activity does nothing more than attune itself with the natural festivity. (Rengifo Vásquez 1998, 108)

In March of 2014 I witnessed the second year in which the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* participated in the *Corso de Corsos*, in an effort to promote and present the music of the Andean communities and peoples to the spectators. The starting point for the parade was packed with dancers, musicians, allegorical cars and street vendors trying to sell food, beverages, and hats to anyone who approached them. Despite the chaotic scenes of people moving in all directions, the *wiphalas* carried by the members of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* allowed me to spot the groups fairly easily. Compared with the groups surrounding us, the musicians and dancers of the group were rather inconspicuous. The men's white shirts, with black pants, an *awayu* tied as a *q'ipi*<sup>172</sup> over their shoulders, the mandatory black fedoras, and the women with their matching white blouses and coloured *polleras* as well as an *awayu* as tied as a *q'ipi*, fell short compared with costumes of the groups in the proximity. Moreover the contrast was strongest with the group of Tinku that was gathering behind us. Their costumes were full of the clashing colours of the bright coloured fabrics and the coloured feathers and other shiny gimmicks attached on their head mounts. The scene unfolding in front of me thus presented two sides of what at the time seemed to me to be the same debate. The two groups composed by urban dwellers were both making claims to represent, what both claim to be Indigenous and cultural practices. Was this then a question of assessing a more or less accurate representation of Indigeneity? Or was there something else going on? This chapter accepts the premise

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<sup>172</sup> The traditional Andean way of carrying something with one, like luggage. It consists of wrapping up what one wants in a rectangular cloth (*Awayu*) in order to carry it on the back.



that there is not just a qualitative difference in both performances, but that there is something else at play here, that is not visible perhaps at first glance.

The practice of autochthonous instruments and music as I have asserted multiple times was part of a fringe movement in the cultural production in Bolivia and in Cochabamba in particular. As I have tried to demonstrate throughout the thesis, the practice of autochthonous music in the Andes carries a social and political weight that is independent of its artistic and aesthetic dimension. Moreover the practice and presentation of autochthonous music, as I have discussed in chapter 4 and 5, are a part of strategies and practices of resistance as well as of cooptation and colonisation. As a consequence one can safely assume that the practice of autochthonous music within the colonial and the republican era, has always had political and social connotations that are inescapable. Its ongoing denigration and marginalisation as well as its commodification and exoticization are testimony of the ongoing nature of colonial social structures and colonial mind-sets of the people. In this sense, the reaction it provokes reflects many aspects of the colonial nature of Bolivian society. What distinguishes the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and its performance most from the *Tinku* dancers on that street, was not just the groups' attempt to connect with their instruments to a larger history of resistance and anti-colonial traditions. Rather what differentiates them is their relation and engagement with the traditions, dances and music which they claim to represent. It is this questioning of what it means to respect the music and the instruments that they play which has allowed them to engage with Andean autochthonous music practices differently. This questioning I suggest led many of the members I was able to interact with, to experience music not just as a political vindication or artistic expression but as a teacher, and a guide in their daily lives. The chapter argues that the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari's* performance at places like the Corso de Corsos cannot be understood just by its political, social, economic and identitarian claims (despite this definitely being part of the performance). Rather I suggest we look at the performance as a site of an Andean worlding within the urban, catholic, westernising context of the city of Cochabamba and its celebrations. This chapter thus takes up the idea of an Andean worlding by exploring its possible meanings and implications through the practice of Andean autochthonous music. The chapter starts with *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* at the Corso de Corso, the main carnival parade through the city centre of Cochabamba, in 2014 and traces back the process that led to the creation of the organisation. It looks at how the common experiences

of nurturing music created the space where different groups were able to interact and importantly exchange their different experiences. The chapter focuses on how according to many, the practice of Andean autochthonous music introduced and nurtured within them the Andean principles of community, reciprocity, complementarity and relationality, opening up a door into the different Indigenous cultures and ways of living and knowing. In this sense, the Chapter follows the question of what it is that is being nurtured by music, in an attempt to better understand what it is that the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* has set itself to nurture as they state in their statutes. (Ayllu Apu-Tunari 2012).

This leads me in the second half of the chapter to explore the relation between Andean autochthonous music and the communitarian values, and Andean ways of being and knowing. How these values are deeply imbedded within the instruments itself and within the way the performances are orchestrated. Furthermore the chapter looks at the role music plays within the Andean religious and ritual practices, and in doing so I show how the musical performance of the *tarka* can be more than just an artistic expression or an act of resistance, but rather a life giving, life renewing activity. By exploring the specificities of the celebration around the first harvest in the Andes, the so-called *Anata* in Aymara or *Phujllay* in Quechua, the chapter delves into different Andean religious practices and ways of being. This allows me then to map what kinds of worlding processes are possible and what kinds of worlds are being constructed within the *Anata Andino* as well as within the context of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and other urban autochthonous music groups

### **6.1. With the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* at the *Corso de Corsos***

The *Corso de Corsos* stands out from other carnival celebrations in the Bolivian Andes, such as the celebrations in the cities of Oruro and La Paz. As I have broadly discussed in the previous chapter, the Carnival of Oruro is marked by its Catholic devotion and the celebration of local religious practices, presenting the spectators with a wide diversity of different religious rituals and practices. Not only is the parade of the *Corso de Corsos* outside of the Catholic celebrations of carnival, its parade is also not devoted to a particular Saint. Unique to the *Corso de Corsos* is the participation of the Bolivian military, with a number of different units that are

stationed in the region. Each unit participates in the parade, dressing up in often sophisticated costumes that combined with choreographed steps often provide satirical and ironic commentary covering a broad number of social, cultural, and even political issues, covering the newest Hollywood Blockbuster movie, as well as by ongoing political and social issues. The Corso de Corsos brings together a wide diversity of different types of participants, from soldiers, to creators of allegorical cars, to folkloric dancers such as you can find in Oruro, La Paz and elsewhere, and also to autochthonous music groups. In a sense, one could argue that the parade resembles to a greater extent the carnival celebrations elsewhere, where different crews participate by dancing and celebrating alongside the parade route. The Corso de Corsos represents the largest parade celebrated within the city of Cochabamba itself.

As opposed to other cities in the Andes, the city of Cochabamba saw many of its festive practices disrupted, even discontinued under the claims of modernisation by its local elites during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. As widely discussed in the previous chapter, religious festivities were not just seen by the elites as being more pagan in nature, and thus going against the evangelisation and civilising mission of the Church and the State, but also as social events that stood at odds with the economic progress and modernising efforts of the region. (Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011, 31-34) As a result the most important religious festivities of the region such as *Urqupiña* or *Santa Vera Cruz Tatala* are found outside of the city of Cochabamba today and not in the city itself.

En los festejos de carnaval, las elites también pudieron imponer su visión modernizante, con manifestaciones bien engalanadas y coloridas, copiadas de Europa representadas en las calles centrales de la ciudad. Se trataba de la instauración de los llamados “corsos”, una forma más o menos ordenada de encauzar a las comparsas carnavalescas por un recorrido callejero claramente delimitado. A comienzos del siglo XX, la lógica del corso carnavalesco logró desplazar las manifestaciones populares de antaño, hacía los extramuros de la ciudad, lo que implicó, además que las clases populares abandonaran las prácticas tradicionales del antiguo carnaval cochabambino, con fuertes vínculos rurales y ritualidades

basadas en los ciclos agrarios.<sup>173</sup> (Sánchez Patzy and Quispe Escobar 2011, 33)

To this day, the festivity makes comparatively few references to the Carnival celebrations in La Paz or Oruro, nor does it claim to have rural nor indigenous roots, rather its allegorical cars, the participation of the military and its folkloric dances stand in strong contrast to the carnival festivities celebrated elsewhere in the valley of Cochabamba. Nevertheless, alongside all other festive parades around Bolivia, the Corso de Corsos has seen an exponential growth both in terms of spectators and participants. As all parades of this size it characterises itself through a cacophony of smells, sounds, and an often seemingly chaotic movement of people. The parade extends over the course of an entire day and attracts thousands of spectators and participants effectively shutting down large parts of the city. All along the parade, street vendors set up their camps, offering beverages, food, hats etc., everything one can possibly need to survive the day as one watching the spectacle unfold on the course of the parade. The chaos intensifies around the starting point of the parade route, where all the different groups and allegorical cars come together and make the last preparations before entering the route.

Over the past decades the parades such as the Corso de Corsos have become sites where the urban elites and an ascending merchant and artisan class showcase their economic and social capital every year. (Lara Barrientos 2007) Every year the parade has new and more expensive costumes, with participants dancing to bigger and better brass bands, and with bigger stars attending the parties. (Lecount 1999, Lara Barrientos 2007, 2011, Abercrombie 1992) The Corso de Corsos and all other *entradas folclóricas* around the country have become spaces where a modern *mestizo* national identity is constructed and reaffirmed and where particular colonial and urban ideas of indigeneity are re-enacted and perpetuated within the different dances and costumes.

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<sup>173</sup> In the carnival festivities, the elites were also able to impose their modernising vision, with well-decorated and colourful manifestations, copied from Europe and represented in the central streets of the city. It was about the establishment of the so-called 'corso,' a more or less orderly way to channel the Carnival parties by a clearly delimited street path. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the logic of the Carnival corso managed to displace the popular manifestations of yesteryear, to the outskirts of the city, which also meant that the popular classes abandoned the traditional practices of the old Cochabamba carnival, with strong rural ties and ritualities based on the agrarian cycles. (My translation)

In this context, the participation of autochthonous groups has been an attempt by its members to question and problematise these depictions, often by attempting to showcase (more accurately) the traditions, dances, and music the other dances are claiming to represent. The *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* was one of a handful of urban autochthonous music groups participating at the Corso de Corsos in 2014, showcasing a variety of different instruments and dances to the spectators on the roads and on television. Over the past decades there has been a constant presence of autochthonous musicians participating at the parade. Moreover, their presence has almost become an expected attraction. This is particularly evident when one follows groups such as the Afro-Bolivian *Organización de Afrodescendientes Mauchi* (Organisation of Afrodescendants Mauchi) who with their unique and vivid rhythms and melodic singing galvanises the masses throughout the entire parade. The distinct high, dense and rich sound of the Andean *tarkas* alongside unique sound and rhythm of the drums of the Mauchi have marked an increased presence of autochthonous music groups at the parade. Their distinct sounds, rhythms, costumes and dances stand out in the cacophony of noise produced by dancers, brass band musicians and carnival floats that are paraded through the city.

The participation of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* has to be seen in the context of a wider effort by different urban autochthonous groups over the course of the past three decades taking a more active and visible role within the cultural and festive scene of the valleys of Cochabamba. Through its participation, the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* aim to promote and vindicate the different Andean cultures, traditions, and sonic aesthetic values that have been excluded and marginalised from the centres of the cities and of power (see 6.1.1). In this sense the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* as an umbrella organisation of different urban autochthonous music groups aim is to nurture autochthonous music alongside the ritual and social practices that come with it. In doing so they aim to challenge the discourses and practices that continue to portray and frame the practices of the different autochthonous instruments, melodies and dances as being backward and a hindrance to progress.

As mentioned in the second chapter the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* emerges out of a series of meetings between the different urban autochthonous groups in 2011 and 2012, and it was formally instituted on the 20 June of 2012 when its first authorities assumed their responsibilities. This is where the different urban autochthonous music groups came together to discuss the current state of autochthonous music in the urban

context of Cochabamba. The *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* serves a rather straightforward purpose, as an effort to consolidate the presence, voices and visibility of autochthonous music within Cochabamba. As one of the leaders of the organisation, at the time I interviewed in 2014 states, the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* emerges as an attempt by the urban autochthonous music groups of Cochabamba to increase their visibility and expand the reach of the different groups.

Porque ya independientemente como grupos, o sea ya hemos llegado ¿no?, a todo lo que podíamos haber hecho digamos. Y [hacer] cosas más grandes, o sea hacer más fuerza ya independientemente, solos, ¿no?, es más difícil... O sea, sí se puede pero yo creo que el camino es más difícil y va ser más largo. Entonces, de eso nace la idea de otros compañeros de empezar a hacer algo juntos. De ahí empieza [la idea] ¿no?, de tratar de unirnos [...]. O sea, todos tenemos el mismo camino, pero [nos acercamos] de diferente forma, entonces como ya hay madurez y ya podemos compartir ese camino, esas diferencias, porque antes había, sí, diferencias fuertes ¿no?<sup>174</sup>

In this sense, the organisation emerges out of the recognition of the weaknesses of the groups, that not only affects the groups but also limits the visibility and exposure autochthonous music can have within the urban area. The quote here alludes to the often informal and fragile organisation of the groups, whose activities are often dependent on the availability of each member. In particular, the communal nature of Andean autochthonous music, requires the strong commitment of the members in order to be able to provide a good performance. The members of the group *Comunidad 21 de Junio* of Cochabamba highlighted this issue very clearly when I asked them about the problems they face on a daily basis.

Bueno, hablando del grupo, siempre va haber alguna dificultad dentro del grupo porque uno no tiene tal vez el tiempo y ahí hay dificultad, no siempre estamos todos presentes. Siempre hay uno o dos que no

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<sup>174</sup> Because as independent groups, that is, we have achieved everything we could have achieved let's say, right? And to make bigger things, that to generate more strength independently, all alone, is more difficult, right? That is to say, it is possible but I believe the path is harder and will be longer. Thus some colleagues come up with the idea to start to do something together. There begins [the idea], right?, to try to unify ourselves [...]. In a sense, we all have the same path, but [we approached it] in different ways, but by now there is maturity, and now we can share that path, those differences, because before there were big differences, right? (My Translation) Interview with JoA 11.04.2014.

pueden, pero no es eso porque no quieren ¿no? Siempre se presenta algo en la vida y entonces [uno] no puede. Esa es la dificultad que podemos también tener ¿no?<sup>175</sup>

Between the practice of music and the different performances, the practice of autochthonous music can be very demanding and requires a commitment not just of the musicians and dancers, but of their entire families. Similarly another member followed up by noting the consuming nature of practicing autochthonous music that often clashes with their work.

Solamente el tiempo nos corre mucho ¿no? No tenemos hay veces [local expression to say: a veces] tiempo... No solamente vivimos de la música, sino que también particularmente [individualmente] tenemos trabajos pendientes ¿no? Entonces, por eso es que hay veces no podemos participar en las diferentes actividades ¿no?<sup>176</sup>

The large disparity in economic remuneration for autochthonous music performances in comparison to other music styles remains considerable, making it impossible for the musicians to live from autochthonous music alone. The practice of autochthonous music, remains to a large extent if not exclusively an activity that people do on the side. And even though groups such as the *Kurmi* or the *21 de Junio* use most of the money they make for the purchase of instruments and the clothing, this is often insufficient to cover all the costs. As a result the purchase of instruments and the clothes used by the groups often relies on the individual members' economic capacities. This is particularly the case for the women's clothes that generally are significantly more expensive than the men's attire. In this sense, the practice of autochthonous music often implies an economic and time investment on the part of the individuals, thus limiting the capacity a single group has to participate and contribute to the different social, political and festive events that are organised throughout the year in the region of Cochabamba alone. The result is that you find the activity of each group fluctuates and becomes very irregular, as the capacity of

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<sup>175</sup> Well speaking of the group, there will always some difficulties within the groups because perhaps someone doesn't have time and then we have a problem, we are not always all present. There are always one or two who can't, but it is not because they don't want to, right? There is always something that happens in life and then one can't [assist]. That is the difficulty that we also can have, right? (My translation) Member of 21 de Junio, group interview 29.03.2014.

<sup>176</sup> Only time always runs away right? Sometimes we don't have time... We don't just live of music, rather each one also has pending work, right? That is why, sometimes we cannot participate in the different activities, right? (My translation) Member of 21 de Junio, group interview 29.03.2014.

each group is not just reliant on the time of its members but also on their economic capabilities. As a member of the *Kurmi* confessed, “es un proceso medio largo con muchos altibajos, se podría decir porque muchas veces nos hemos sentido desgastados, caídos y otras veces bien fortalecidos.”<sup>177</sup> As a consequence, many groups struggle to maintain the spaces they open for themselves within the cultural scene as well as more broadly within society. Furthermore this irregular nature is further aggravated by the often spontaneous and informal nature of the groups, making the access to funding revenues available through the government or through other Non-Governmental Organisations more difficult if not impossible. These difficulties force many groups to seek a more institutionalised and formal organisation that allows them to seek a legal status in front of the State and its institutions through the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* that provides a structure that the state can recognise and engage with.

The following sections look at process leading to the creation of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. In doing so, I show how the framework established around the notion of nurturing and being nurtured by music as the basis for the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* can help us better understand the world and with it the social and political change the groups want to bring about. In this sense, the remainder of the chapter looks at not just why the groups saw the necessity to come together but also how they came together, and how they envisioned their activities within the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*.

#### 6.1.1. Organising through music

As already discussed in chapter 2, the embrace and showcasing of different Andean instruments, dances and music styles is part of wider political project of vindication and valorisation of Indigenous cultures and peoples which the member groups of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* are invested in. The constitution of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* in 2012 was an important moment for urban autochthonous groups, as it provided a platform where the groups were able to articulate a social and political project that went beyond the objectives of the individual groups and musicians. But the process of coming together was not a straight forward process. Rather the organisation is the

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<sup>177</sup> “it is a relatively long process with many ups and downs, one could say that many time we felt worn out and fallen and at other times well strengthened.” (My translation) Interview with FF 11.03.2014.



outcome of a long process of many failed attempts and confrontations between the groups that allowed the groups to come together around a common objective. This process is reflected in the Manifesto the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* distributed on 11 of October 2013:

Somos una organización integradora que agrupa un gran número de comunidades, centros culturales y grupos autóctonos [...], como resultado de más de 40 años de trabajo reproduciendo, regenerando y difundiendo la Cosmovisión Andina en espacios urbanos a través de la Música Autóctona (Andina y Amazónica). Se ha luchado contra dogmas, prejuicios, modelos y paradigmas impuestos por la sociedad dominante, llegando a ser gestores de grandes cambios sociales.<sup>178</sup>

(*Ayllu Apu-Tunari* 2013)

The members of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* see themselves as part of an ongoing process that started in 1970s and 1980s. As we have already mentioned previously (see Chapter 2) the end of the 1970s and late 1980s saw the creation of a number of urban autochthonous groups in the cities of La Paz, Oruro, Potosí, Sucre and Cochabamba. In Cochabamba groups such as *Llajtaymanta*,<sup>179</sup> *Kanata*, *Qimsa Mayu* (all three no longer exist), alongside other groups like *Wiñay Marka*, *Comunidad Laboral Santo Domingo* as well as *C.I.C.A. Ayllu*, or the *Puwisuyus* were slowly establishing themselves within the cultural scene of Cochabamba, gaining attention through performances in places like the Teatro Achá, the main municipal theatre of Cochabamba.

It is important to highlight here that the groups mentioned are often referred to by the groups I interviewed as the first urban autochthonous music groups in Cochabamba. Yet as I have previously observed in this thesis, autochthonous music groups have been present in some shape or form in the cities of the Andes as well as in Cochabamba since their founding. Despite this, there is very little documentation available describing these groups. Often, they are just mentioned in passing if they are mentioned at all. This is particularly the case with Cochabamba where there is

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<sup>178</sup> We are an inclusive organisation which brings together a large number of communities, cultural centres and autochthonous groups; we are the product of over 40 years of work reproducing, regenerating and spreading Andean Cosmology in urban areas through (Andean and Amazonian) autochthonous music. We have been fighting against dogmas, prejudices, structures and paradigms imposed by the dominant society, in the process we became facilitators of great social changes. (My translation)

<sup>179</sup> Not to be confused with the folkloric group also called *Llajtaymanta* from Oruro that was founded in 1986.

very little reference material. What we can see from the work of authors such as Sigl and Mendoza Salazar (2012b), Barragán Sandi (2002), Mújica Angulo (2017), Guss (2006) or Rios (2012), is that in the 1950s and 1960s a seemingly new type of urban autochthonous music groups start to emerge. Up to that point the references to urban autochthonous groups are attached to particular religious festivities such as the Gran Poder or are seen as part of continuing cultural practices by immigrant communities in the growing urban landscape. As such these groups seem to be very much contained within specific zones and part of particular social sectors and as such are seen with much suspicion and are despised by the urban elites. On the other hand, the groups that emerge in particular after the 1960s seem to take a more political line, and are much more a part of the creation of a particular 'Bolivian folklore.' Autochthonous music groups were part of the same effort to redefine what Bolivia is as a nation and as a society and what it should look like, as the dancers in the Carnival parades of Oruro, or the music groups experimenting with different instruments and melodies (see Chapter 4).

In the case of Cochabamba, urban autochthonous music groups such as *Llajtaymanta*, *Kanata* and *Qimwa Mayu* were among the first to emerge in that period. As a current member of the group *Comuniḁad Urbana Satasiñani* and long-time musician of Cochabamba remembered, both *Llajtaymanta* and *Kanata* played an important role fomenting and shaping the emergence of other groups in following decades.

Entonces, estos dos grupos han sido la semilla para la existencia de varios grupos [...] Como en ese tiempo eran jóvenes y tenían sus ideologías, además tenían, digamos, una sed de conocimiento, de saber de lo que es nuestra cultura autóctona. Entonces hubieron, tal vez por cuestiones de opiniones o ideologías, [...] separación [es] entre los grupos entre... por decir, a un grupo le gustaba digamos más hacer la música y a otras personas les gustaba investigar, de cómo es la música autóctona y cómo se lleva a cabo en las comunidades. De esa manera han habido disyuntivas en esos dos grupos. [...] Al mismo tiempo, [estos primeros grupos] han empezado a generar otros grupos [...] de la división de esos grupos.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> So these two groups have been the seed for the existence of various groups had. [...] As at that time, they were all young and had their ideologies, they also had a thirst for knowledge, for knowing what our autochthonous culture is. As result perhaps there were differences of opinions or ideologies

As discussed in Chapter 3, urban autochthonous groups have from the beginning been closely associated with the ‘Indigenous cause.’ These groups were part of a wider ‘*indigenista-indianista*’ social and political movement spearheaded by the *Katarista* movement. They were part of a broader movement that aimed to challenge the structural, and continuous denigration of the different Indigenous peoples, and rural life more broadly. (Portugal Mollinedo and Macusaya Cruz 2016) Pushing for the political and social recognition of Indigenous rights and peoples through the valorisation of Andean cultures, religious practices, and in this case Andean autochthonous music. In this context these early groups were important actors promoting the celebrations of the *Inti Watana* (Andean new year on the 21 of June) or the *Q’uwa* rituals in urban spaces, in an effort to not just bring the sonic and visible aesthetics of the Andes into the cities but also the religious and philosophies of the Andean cultures into the urban centre. Groups such as the Pusicuyu are a good example in this regard.

Se organiza el año 1983 –por iniciativa de universitarios residentes en Cochabamba con sensibilidad y respeto a las culturas quechua y aymará-, con la finalidad de afirmar y difundir las culturas andina y amazónica. El conocimiento de la situación social de las comunidades lograda durante el cumplimiento de sus programas y los estudios profesionales, llevaron al grupo a organizarse como Pusicuyu.<sup>181</sup>  
(Pusicuyu 2010)

The groups mentioned so far are characterised by their effort to engage with and valorise the different Andean cultures. In this sense, these groups were part of a broader effort to vindicate and establish Andean cultural practices as relevant and valuable practices that deserve the same recognition as other more to ‘mainstream’

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[...] [creating] separation between groups between ... Let’s say a group liked to make more music, and other people liked to research what autochthonous music is and how it is carried out in the communities. That way, dilemmas there have been difficult for those two groups. As a result [these first groups] began to generate other groups out of the division of those groups. (My translation) Interview with OC, 13.03.2014.

Orlando Chávez Ayaviri, 53 years old, of Cochabamba started playing autochthonous and popular music in the 1970s. As member of the music group Renacer he traveled in the late 1980s to Europe, where he toured playing Bolivian folklore until his return to Bolivia the year 2000. At the present he is a founding member of the group *Satawiniñani*.

<sup>181</sup> It was organised in 1983–on the initiative of university students residing in Cochabamba with sensibility and respect to the Quechua and Aymará cultures–with the objective of affirming and spreading the Andean and Amazonian cultures. Knowledge about the social situation of the communities [referring here to Andean communities] gathered throughout the academic programs and through professional studies, led the group to organise as Pusicuyu. (My translation)

mestizo and 'western' cultural practices receive. The groups that emerged in that period of time were thus deeply engaged and responded to the different social and political circumstances of their time. Along similar lines a founding member of the group *Nayjama* of Sucre recalled:

Justamente alrededor de los setenta y empezamos a tocar música pero no nos sentíamos artistas sino más bien como músicos del pueblo, músicos de la gente, músicos de las fiestas y nos íbamos a las fiestas de los campesinos. Pero así nos formamos, un pequeño grupo que nos llamamos Nayjama en Sucre. [...] Después de tener la primera experiencia [...], más o menos de cinco años, ya teníamos una colección de instrumentos porque viajábamos a todas las fiesta de Bolivia. Traíamos bombos de Charazani, íbamos a las entradas autóctonas en Potosí, había unas entradas autóctonas en ese tiempo de los ch'utillos era increíble.<sup>182</sup>

As the quotes above show groups such as *Nayjama* in Sucre, but also similarly *Pwisuyu* or the *C.I.C.A. Ayllu* in Cochabamba were characterised because of their efforts to document and preserve different cultural, religious, social and political practices of the different Andean communities and peoples. By promoting and reproducing the different instruments and music styles of different Andean communities and peoples these urban autochthonous groups were challenging dominant narratives that portrayed and dismissed the music of the different Indigenous communities as monotonous and primitive, that could not innovate and change. The only value attributed was a exploitable and cooptable 'resources' for a 'new' *mestizo* nation. In this sense, the groups stood against (and continue to stand against) the trends in patron saint festivals (see Chapter 4) where cultural and ritual practices of indigenous peoples are seen as a resource that a 'modern' urban society can use and reinvent itself. This was brought to the point by founding member of the

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<sup>182</sup> Just around the seventies, we started playing music, but we did not feel like artists but rather as musicians of the village, musicians of the people, musicians of the feasts and we went to the celebrations of the peasants. That is how we formed a small group that we call Nayjama in Sucre. [...] After having the first experience [...] of more or less than five years we had already a collection of instruments because we travelled to all the festivities of Bolivia. We brought drums from Charazani, we went to the autochthonous parades in Potosí, there were some autochthonous parades in that time of the ch'utillos it was incredible. (My translation) Interview with DT, 17.01.2014.

*Taller de Proyección Cultural of the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés* (UMSA) presented in Chapter 3, when in her interview with me she explained that:

La Bolivia que se muestra, que se difunde, o que se utiliza en cierto modo, no se... [sólo se usa] como una promoción como una difusión, la cultura normalmente se la ve... se la folkloriza ¿no?, [...] es bien folklórico. Sin embargo ¿para que te sirve mostrar la otra Bolivia? ¿A la Bolivia de los pueblos? ¿A la Bolivia mística? ¿La Bolivia ritual? ¿A la Bolivia que vive en la tierra que no tiene las mismas oportunidades? Digamos, pero que sí, es el sustento, la base cultural de todo, de este proceso ahora digamos ¿no?<sup>183</sup>

The point raised here precisely questions the political project that emerged out of the revolution of 1952, that in an effort to found a *mestizo*, Bolivia sought to modernise and folklorise cultural practices around the country in order to weave a picture of a Bolivian society that has managed to grow out of its 'ancestral indigenous roots' and reinvent itself in a modern facade. However in doing so, this reaffirms the Indigenous as being part of a different time and a different world that can be employed in order to distinguish itself from other nations. In this context the performances by urban autochthonous groups aimed to challenge these dominant depictions, and as we have seen with the case of the *Kurmi*, might have been able to open up spaces other autochthonous music groups could not access, given the latent racism and discrimination within Bolivian society. In a similar sense, the testimony from XM continued by suggesting that:

Se mostraba estas imágenes digamos, de grupos de música autóctona, [...] lo veían como algo muy exótico. Sí, ¡qué bonito! ¡qué lindo! ¿de dónde serán? Sin embargo, lo que no pasaba era ... entendernos como parte de eso. En las ciudades nos ha costado, cuando nosotros tocábamos música, no sabían que éramos de La Paz, o pensaban que

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<sup>183</sup> The Bolivia that is shown, that is diffused, or used in a certain way, I don't know... [is only used] as a promotion as a diffusion, culture than is usually seen... it is folklorised right? [...] It is really folkloric. And yet, what is the purpose to show the other Bolivia? The Bolivia of the peoples? The mystical Bolivia? The ritual Bolivia? The Bolivia that lives on the land, that does not have the same opportunities? Let's say. But that is the sustenance, the cultural basis of everything, of this very process now, let's say no? (My translation) XM in group interview with XM and DO 02.04.2014. Ximena Martínez, born in La Paz, is a founding member of the *Taller de Proyección Cultural of the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés*. She studied Social Communication at the Universidad Mayor de San Andres in La Paz. She played a key role organising the different departamental and national congresses between 2011 and 2014.

éramos de otros lugares: ‘Qué linda danza ¿de qué país es? ¿del Ecuador?’ Porque les veían blanquitos a los chicos o a las chicas [...] universitarios, así diferentes, [...] Pero eso también ha hecho que mucha gente entre a buscar ¿no? A decir ‘¿qué cosa es esto?’ Ha jalado mucho a algunos compañeros de la facultad de Arquitectura y de otros lados.<sup>184</sup>

Colonialism and modern urban life was in many ways experienced by urban autochthonous musicians as a process alienating them and society from Andean ways of living and knowing, by imposing capitalist and individualistic economic and social structures. The promotion of autochthonous music was seen by the groups as a way to counteract the commodification and instrumentalisation of indigenous cultural and religious practices by the dominant urban/*mestizo* culture. In this context, there seems to have been continuous efforts among the groups to come together and create an umbrella organisation of the different autochthonous music groups. But despite all the commonalities, there were many differences among the groups in terms of purpose and the form.

Yo creo, hace treinta años [...] estaba la idea de organizarnos, nunca se podía. Intentábamos, no se podía... yo pienso, igual es un resultado de un ciclo vital que ha sido toda esa experiencia y que tenía que darse, pues, tenía que darse. Quizás también han sido nuevas generaciones que han aportado nuevas formas de organizarse, mejor manera de estructurarse.<sup>185</sup>

A similar idea was put forward by another urban autochthonous musician of Cochabamba who was present among the first urban autochthonous groups in the

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<sup>184</sup> These images were shown let's say, from autochthonous music groups, they [...] saw it as something very exotic... Oh how pretty, how nice, where are they from. However what did not happen was... to understand ourselves as part of that. In the cities it cost us, when we played music they did not know that we were from La Paz, or they thought we were from other places: ‘What a beautiful dance of which country is it? From Ecuador?’ And because they saw the guys or the girls being white, university students, being different, [...] being white and from the city, they pay more attention. [...] But that also made that many people start to inquire, right? To ask ‘what is this?’ It has attracted some colleagues of the Faculty of Architecture and from other places. (My translation) XM in group interview with XM and DO 02.04.2014.

<sup>185</sup> I believe thirty years ago there was the idea of organising ourselves, but it was not possible, we tried but it was not possible... I believe, it is the result of a living cycle, that all the experience had to be gained, it had to happen. Perhaps it was as well the new generations that contributed new ways of organising, and better ways to structure. (My translation) Interview with JS, 28.03.2014.

City. He also argues that the idea of coming together was born in the 1980s, but failed to materialise.

Ya en la década del 80 ya surgió la idea, este, de organizarnos para ser una organización de grupos autóctonos. Así, ya por el 87, 88 cuando se hizo un encuentro en San Antonio, [...] donde pudimos tocar todos los grupos autóctonos como un solo grupo ¿no? De ahí ya empezó la idea de organizarse ¿no? después [...] se ve ya, digamos, ya para el 2000 [...] se ve, este, ya un poco más afianzado esta organización o más bien querer organizarnos en una organización, porque ya había bastante grupos autóctonos, entre jóvenes, antiguos.<sup>186</sup>

This quest to document and preserve, raised important discussions over cultural exploitation, cooptation, distortion, and ownership that continues to create heated discussions within the scene. Given the political nature of these issues, and the political nature of many groups, the differences and rivalries were not just questions of style or aesthetics but lay in the reasons why they played music. Thus despite several attempts over time to bring together the different groups, there were always setbacks and problems that arose which prevented the materialisation of this project. During my fieldwork it became apparent that as suggested above, the differences and rivalries between groups were important in shaping the different groups, and the scene of urban autochthonous groups, with groups pursuing different objectives. In first two decades of the new millennium this started to change and the groups started to grow closer. To fully understand all the forces driving these changes a more ethnographic research would be necessary. This notion of changing relations among the groups was taken up as well by a founding member of *Wilancha* when he explained to me that:

Como te estaba contando, cada comunidad tenía su forma de existir, ¿no ve?, o sea, de hacer. A veces éramos rivales, a veces no compartíamos ideas, pero ya digamos [hemos ido madurando]. Como

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<sup>186</sup> Already in the 80s the idea arose to organise ourselves, to be an organisation of urban autochthonous groups. Already around 87, 88 when a meeting in San Antonio was held [...], where we were able to play together with all the autochthonous groups as only one group, right? The idea to organise ourselves started there, right? Later [...] one sees that, let's say, by 2000 [...] things were already a little bit more consolidated, with this organisation or rather this desire to organise ourselves in an organisation, because there were already many autochthonous groups between young and old. (My translation) Interview with OC, 13.03.2014.

al inicio mi comunidad [Wilancha] [...] tenía otras ideas [...] tal vez de música. [...] Los grupos antiguos que ya tenían más idea y los grupos, digamos, de nuestra época de finales de los 90 o sea ya empieza a madurar todos, ya no existe esa, ... [mismas diferencias] como antes ¿no?<sup>187</sup>

The early 2000s were marked by the emergence of new groups of autochthonous groups led mostly by young people and university students, who quickly started to gain their own spaces in Cochabamba, and who through their activities managed to change some of the dynamics among the groups in Cochabamba. He continues by explaining this process in more detail:

O sea que cada uno [es] diferente... Entonces, es interesante que ya los compañeros empiezan ya a unirse ¿no? Como, siempre hemos estado unidos digamos en fiestas y todo eso, pero así digamos [...] así todos diversos. Porque siempre, claro, ha habido uniones entre grupos que se asemejan. Por ejemplo, un grupo, digamos que nosotros nos hemos estado uniendo con los C.I.C.A. Ayllus, [con quienes] [...] compartimos sus ideas, todo, pero luego de eso, ¿unirnos con otras comunidades que tienen otra forma de pensar? No había eso. Entonces, lo interesante es que ya existe madurez, y también algo de por qué luchar ¿no?<sup>188</sup>

The process of coming together thus did not erase the differences among the groups but as the quote suggests, there was a process of maturing by the groups that lead to an improvement of the relations among the groups. During my time with the groups I was able to observe the differences among the groups in the way they organised themselves or the events they attended and also in the way they understood what

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<sup>187</sup> As I was telling you every community had its way of being, right?, of doing [things]. Sometimes we were rivals, at times we did not share ideas, but let's say [we went on to mature]. For instance, in the beginning, my community [Wilancha, we] had other ideas, [...] about music. [...] The older groups who already had a better idea and the groups let's say, of our time of the late '90s, we all began to mature. There no longer exists those..., same [differences] as before, no? (My translation) Interview with JoA 11.04.2013.

<sup>188</sup> That is every one is different... So it's interesting that our colleagues are already starting to join, right? Like, we have always been united in the feasts and all that, [...] but being all diverse [separated?]. Of course there always were always unions between similar groups. For instance a group, let's say that we have been uniting with are the C.I.C.A. Ayllus, [with whom] we share the ideas, everything, we join together with other communities that have another way of thinking, that didn't exist. So the interesting thing is that there is already a maturity, and also something to fight for, right? (My translation) Interview with JoA 11.04.2013.



autochthonous music was. But as the following quote by a member of the *Ayllu Ñan* demonstrates, a relation of complementarity emerged among the groups that perhaps to that extent did not exist before.

Y lo que [...] escuchaba igual de los mayores ¿no? Entre ellos, como en todos lados, había ciertas rivalidades [...]. Y de ahí nosotros, [vimos que] éramos como, los [grupos] antiguos digamos ¿no? Y nosotros empezábamos junto con otros grupos, como los *Kurmi* Suriki, los hermanos Wilancha. Y ahí [hemos] empezado a ver otra, como una..., ¿que se llama? ... una generación, digamos, en esa otra generación, en todas las fiestas ¿no? Siempre hemos empezado a hacer aynis con los... principalmente con los hermanos *Kurmis* ¿no? O sea, ellos nos colaboraban, hemos ido a la fiesta de mi pueblo Alalay ¿no?, Tercera Sección de Mizque y así hemos ido hermanándonos de a poco. Y, en la medida que iba creciendo, digamos, este abrazo, este abrazo gigante digamos que la música nos trae ¿no? La música es como la sangre que corre en todos ¿no?, está ahí. Y hemos empezado a hablar de lo que es, de organizarnos, de hace muchos años. [...] Era complicado entendernos, y en cada fiesta que nos veíamos siempre íbamos hablando de esto, iba madurando de a poco.<sup>189</sup>

As these testimonies suggest, the good relationships between the ‘new’ groups seems to have been the key elements driving the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*. Their constant exchange and support of each other’s activities played a key role in helping the groups find common ground. But I also suggest that the particular socio-political context within which groups such as the *Kurmi* or the *Ayllu Ñan* have emerged played an important role in this process too. As I have suggested throughout this thesis, a break seems to have happened in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The period was one of change and

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<sup>189</sup> And what I also heard from the elders, right? Between them as everywhere else there were certain rivalries. And from there we [saw we] were the same as the older [groups] let’s say no? And we started together with other groups, like the *Kurmi* Suriki, the brothers of Wilancha. And there we started to see another, how do you call it? A new generation let’s say, and that generation in all the festivities, we started to make aynis? with... principally with the brothers *Kurmi* right? That is they helped us out, we went to the feast in my village Alalay right? Third Section of Mizque, and so we slowly started to bond together. And as we went on growing let’s say, this giant embrace that is the music brings to us right? Music is like the blood that runs through all of us, right?, it is there. And we started to talk what it [music] is, of organising ourselves since many years. [...] It was complicated to understand ourselves, and in each festivities we saw each other we spoke about this, so it slowly matured. (My translation) Interview with WF, 13.02.2014.

hope, and as I have discussed in more detail in the first Chapter, the fall of the neo-liberal regime in 2003 and the rise of the MAS, created a sentiment that changed and showed a better life was possible. As I have suggested, this change is due in large part to the rise of the Indigenous movements in Bolivian politics, and their consolidation as the alternative model for a better and more just Bolivian society. The increased presence and awareness of the Indigenous Cause also opened up more spaces for many urban autochthonous groups. Over the last two decades, the horizon of the groups I was able to engage with began to grow, beyond their immediate context. This was particularly visible with the groups like the *Kurmi*, *Wilancha* or the *Ayllu Ñan* just to name three as the following testimony of a *Kurmi* member suggests:

Porque también nosotros mismos nos hemos dado cuenta que ya no somos jóvenes que sólo hemos aprendido la música. Que ya no somos jóvenes que queremos hacer sólo música, sino justamente, si vamos en las marchas, si participábamos en las reuniones y a muchos de nosotros o de esos entonces que ya eran personas adultas, tenían familias, entonces muchos problemas sociales les incumbía a ellos, también a los jóvenes. Porque, sí habían problemas que nos afectaba a todos. Desde allí hemos empezado a reconocer más como un movimiento, más que como grupos autóctonos o músicos no más. Entonces [...] hemos empezado a hacer cosas mucho más grandes, mucho más fuerte. Fruto de esto, yo me animo a decir que también gracias a este proceso de lucha a lado de nuestro pueblo con... y entonces, eso era una de lo que más nos ha llevado a preguntar, ¿qué hacemos ahora? ¿[qué] estamos creciendo?<sup>190</sup>

In Cochabamba in particular the 'Water War' in 2000 was often mentioned by my interview partners as an important event where people came together. The testimony here connects the change with the participation of the groups in the different social

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<sup>190</sup> Because we ourselves have realised that we are no longer young, that we only learned the music, that we are no longer young people who want to make music alone. Precisely, if we go on the marches, if we participated in the meetings and many of us or [people] those times were adult people and had families. So many social problems concern them and the young people because there were problems that affected us all. From there we have begun to recognise ourselves more as a movement, rather than as an autochthonous groups or as just musicians. Then [...] we started to make things much bigger, much stronger. As a result of this, I dare to say that thanks to this process of fighting alongside our people with ... and then that was one of the things that got us to ask, what do we do now that [we] are growing? (My translation) Interview with FF, 11.03.2014.

protest that were taking place since the end of the 1990s and in particular in the first years of the new millennium. It seems to me that in this context of social change the objectives of the groups also expanded and as we will discuss in the following section in more detail, began to be projected on the regional and national policy level, while at the same time there seems to have been a deepening in the groups' engagement with autochthonous music and the implications the practice of this music entailed. In this sense, the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* is the result of a coming together of urban autochthonous groups led by an emerging friendship among the groups within a social political context of change, marked by the downfall of the neoliberal project and the rise of the Indigenous movements and the calls for a new Constitutional Assembly.

#### **6.1.2. Nurturing and being nurtured by music**

By joining forces the exchange and support among the groups has been further strengthened. The *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* has been keen in promoting relations of exchange and solidarity among its members, by actively calling to support the different activities of the groups. In other words, the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* helped to create and nurture a network which the different groups can fall back on, in particular providing a large pool of musicians and dancers that can jump in and help out. It was not uncommon during my fieldwork to see members of different groups come together to help each other out in the musical performance. Through the annual rotating system of authorities and the different responsibilities are distributed among the groups, making the additional burden more bearable for the individuals and the groups. The *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* thus helps the different groups maintain a certain level of consistency even in times of weaker member activity. But the purpose of the organisation was not just to strengthen the ties among member groups and formalise the relationships among the groups. Rather by establishing themselves as non-profit civil organisation, their objective was to be recognised by the State and its institutions as a legitimate legal entity. This goal is further stressed out under article 11 a) and b) of their Organic Statutes where they state:

Artículo 11°.- Son Fines de la O-AAT [Organización de Comunidades, Centros Culturales y Grupos Autóctonos Ayllu Apu-Tunari]:

- a) Ser reconocidos, visibilizados e identificados ante la sociedad y el Estado Plurinacional, a partir de nuestra identidad como comunidades, centros culturales y grupos autóctonos, como una Organización unida, fortalecida y sólida.
- b) La consolidación de procesos y espacios de desarrollo y difusión de la Cultura Autóctona en todos los niveles y en todas las instancias e instituciones estatales (municipales y nacionales) y educativas.<sup>191</sup> (Ayllu Apu-Tunari 2012)

Doing so the groups hoped to establish a stronger presence within the local political decision making process, and through its status as an umbrella organisation claim more legitimacy and political influence than a single group is capable of. As a consequence, the process leading to the creation of the organisation also meant a coming together politically of the groups, that allowed them to formulate a common proposal that turned around the idea of nurturing and being nurtured by autochthonous music (see also Chapter 3).

Reflecting back on the process, one of the leaders of *Ayllu Ñan* in 2011, highlighted a sense of urgency among the groups in Cochabamba to move beyond talking and debating and to come together and create a concrete organisation that had the practice and promotion of autochthonous music at its core.

El 2010 es que, sí, ya dijimos, mucho ya hemos hablado, es momento de hacer algo en serio ¿no? Y así decidimos, ya armamos la comisión para convocar un primer encuentro ¿no? Entonces dijimos, no, no... hemos tenido muchos encuentros, además, cada fiesta ha sido un encuentro. Entonces, dijimos haremos entonces un congreso ¿no? Un congreso con cuatro líneas temáticas claras ¿no? [Que eran] hablar

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<sup>191</sup> Article 11°.- The purposes of the O-AAT [Organization of Communities, Cultural Centers and Autochthonous Groups Ayllu Apu-Tunari] are:

To be recognized, visibilized and identified before society and the Plurinational State, based on our identity as communities, cultural centers and autochthonous groups, as an Organisation that is united, strengthened and solid.

The consolidation of processes and spaces for the development and dissemination of the Autochthonous Culture at all levels and in all instances of the state (municipal and national) as well as in the educational institutions.

sobre nuestros principios y ideología, sobre el rol de la música en nuestras vidas y en la sociedad ¿no? Otro el carácter ritual que tiene la música, hablar del calendario. [...] Ahí sí, hubo bastante fuerza en la convocatoria, y el 2011 es que tuvimos el congreso.<sup>192</sup>

The Congress of 2011 was perceived as a turning point for him and for many within the community. By focusing on the common experience that practicing autochthonous music brought about, they were able to put their differences into perspective. The conversation started from a growing consensus that autochthonous music had to be understood as a holistic social phenomenon that touches many different aspects of social life in general and Andean social and religious practices in particular.

En ese congreso ya nacieron las ideas cómo pensaban los jóvenes en cuanto a la música autóctona. Ya no era realmente música autóctona eran cuestiones más profundas, donde empieza a nacer el vivir bien, el ayni como auto ayuda. Después, algunas ponencias que han expuesto los jóvenes que evidentemente se nota más el estudio. Antes [la pregunta] era sólo lo que es la música ¿no? Ahora es mucho más. [...] Entonces, en ese primer congreso ha salido muchas luces, para poder organizarnos mucho mejor y, en realidad, los jóvenes han tenido más... su ideología, que no sólo a la música sino más profundo en cuanto a nuestra investigación de nuestra cultura.<sup>193</sup>

As the testimony above suggests, the conversations led them to an understanding of the social, political as well as religious context within which Andean and Amazonian autochthonous music is practiced. Music here became a guiding and organising

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<sup>192</sup> It is in 2010 that we said, we have spoken too much, it is time to make something serious, right? And so we decided to build a commission to call or for a first encounter right? But then we said, no, no... we already had many encounters, plus each festival has been an encounter, so we said let's make a congress right? A congress with four clear themes, no? [Which were to] talk about our principles and ideology, [talk] about the role of music in our lives and in society, right? An other was the ritual character of music, and talk about the calendar. Then there was a lot of strength in our call, and in 2011 we held the congress. (My translation) Interview with WF, 13.02.2014.

<sup>193</sup> In that congress the ideas about autochthonous music were born out of the thoughts of the young people. It was no longer really about autochthonous music, it was about more profound questions, where the 'vivir bien,' the 'ayni' as self-help were being born. After a couple of presentations by the young people, where you can see more of their studies. Before [the question] was just what is music, right? Now it is much more. [...] So in that first congress many lights [ideas] emerged, in order to organise ourselves much better, and in reality the young people had more... their ideology, that it is not just music but something more profound regarding the research of our culture. (My translation) Interview with OC, 13.03.2014.

principle, through which the groups made sense of their role and task within society. But this also demands in the sense of reciprocity and relationality that the groups felt they had to nurture and raise music in return. This understanding of music as a guide, a teacher, deeply embedded within the fabric of society, is best captured within the notion of a nurturing music expressed in the quote below by the former leader of the *Ayllu Ñan*:

Todos coincidimos en algo no? [...] Con mucha fuerza ha salido la crianza de la música ¿no? Y por eso también cerramos, digamos, a la organización a gente que cría la música y es criada por la música. [...] Y como principio importante para la organización es eso ¿no? La crianza de la música.<sup>194</sup>

The testimony shows clearly how the task of nurturing music here invokes another way of relating to music, to each other and the space one inhabits. To nurture here means to nurture the social norms, the culture, cosmology, and ritual practices as well. The practice of music, or rather the *nurturing* of music, I argue has to be understood as a world building practice. Then to nurture music is to nurture a world where the music can unfold within its own terms. And to be nurtured by music means to be constituted through music and the worlds the melodies engender.

As a result, the practice of autochthonous music does not just require a serious engagement with the artistic performance, but it also implies a respect towards the context and the cultures out of which the instruments and melodies come. As such, to nurture music requires an engagement with the religious and ritual practices of which music is an element. Music I suggest can be understood as part of a complex relational system holding the equilibrium between the human world, the natural world, and world of the *Waq'as*, *Apus*, *Awichas*, *Awkis* (of the divine entities). In this sense, I propose that the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*, together with its member groups, are engaged in a process of invoking an Andean world or Andean worlding process within the context of Cochabamba. This was perhaps best expressed during a meeting of the *Kurmi*:

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<sup>194</sup> We coincided on something, right? [...] The nurturing of music came out with much strength, right? And that is why we closed let's say the organisation, to people who nurture music and is being nurtured by music. [...] And as an important principal for the organisation is that no? The nurturing of music. (My translation) Interview with WF, 13.02.2014.

[Queremos] aprovechar estas capacidades y plantear un nuevo modelo de organización ante esta coyuntura en la sociedad ¿no? O sea, estamos proponiendo [...] estamos proponiendo de verdad, encaminarnos a formar una comunidad dentro de toda esta situación de la sociedad que vivimos, con todos los problemas que tiene, con todas las cuestiones económicas. [...] Queremos organizarnos para crear un nuevo espacio dentro de esta sociedad, para construir una nueva sociedad, pero a partir de nuestra experiencia comunitaria que hemos tenido o cultural que tenemos.<sup>195</sup>

The project that is emerging out of the groups is one that seeks to promote and establish different ways of relating and interacting with each other, based on the principles of reciprocity, complementarity and relationality. As such the notion of nurturing music and being nurtured by music goes beyond the question of recognition or that of cultural valorisation, rather as the testimonies above have suggested we are talking of an effort to transform society itself. Thus I suggest that to reduce these experiences to mere claims of recognition or identity politics means to fail to acknowledge the transformative and decolonial potentialities the experiences of these groups can bring, in particular in urban spaces where Indigenous practices and ways of living continue to be structurally and systematically looked down upon as something to be overcome. Article 4 of the organisational statutes in this sense lay out the worlding project of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* very clearly :

Es expresión viva de la naturaleza de la O-AAT la Crianza de la MÚSICA COMUNITARIA en sus incisos:

a) Criamos a la música porque la música también nos cría. Esta crianza está ligada a la CHACRA y expresa la naturaleza del alma en varias formas.

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<sup>195</sup> [We want] to take advantage of these capacities, and to propose a new model of organisation in this social conjuncture, right? In other words, we are proposing ... we are really proposing to walk as a community within this the current situation of the society we live in, with all the problems it has, with all the economic questions. [...] We want to organise ourselves in order to create new spaces within this society, where we can build a new society, but from our communitarian experiences that we had or that we culturally have. (My translation) Meeting of the Kurmi of the 23.11.2014

- b) La Crianza de la Música no discrimina y junto con su manifestación corporal, la danza, expresa la RITUALIDAD en nuestra relación con la comunidad de las WAQAS.
- c) La RESPONSABILIDAD de la Crianza de la Música, se manifiesta en el respeto de los tiempos y espacios que le corresponden a cada instrumento.<sup>196</sup> (Ayllu Apu-Tunari 2012 emphasis in the original)

For the members, the practice of music is not just a way of situating themselves within the political and social struggles of the different indigenous movements and organisations in Bolivia. Rather, as the quote suggests, their aim is broader.

The organisation emphasises the use of autochthonous music as the medium through which it is seeking to provoke change within Bolivian society and the Bolivian Plurinational State. It is precisely through music that the organisation sees itself to be part of the wider political, cultural, social and historical vindication led by the indigenous peoples. By continuing and nurturing the practice of the *tarkas* along with the *sikus*, *pinkillus*, *kena kenas* and all other autochthonous instruments, the urban autochthonous musicians aim to contribute to the survival and resistance of the different local Andean and Amazonian peoples' practices, journeys, fights, marches and lives. The actions of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* reveal how these musical practices, their rituals and aesthetic and social values continue to be nourished and practiced, despite the different, systematic, continuous and ongoing attempts over the past 500 years to eradicate them, and thus they show how music within the Andean context of ongoing colonialism is a site of resistance and anti-colonial struggle. By choosing to focus on the practice of autochthonous music, the groups have found a way not just of promoting Andean peoples' political and social agency but also promoting an alternative way of living. Music they claim enables us to question the colonial structures that shape the lives and the way people think, and the dreams and aspirations they have. Music if understood in its totality, here, becomes an

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<sup>196</sup> It is a living expression of the nature of the O-AAT the Nurture of COMMUNAL MUSIC in its paragraphs:

A) We nurture music because music also nurtures us. This nurturing is linked to CHACRA and expresses the nature of the soul in various forms.

B) The Nurture of Music does not discriminate and along with its corporal manifestation, the dance, it expresses the RITUALITY in our relations with the community of the WAQAS.

C) The RESPONSIBILITY of Nurturing Music, is manifested in the respect of the times and spaces that correspond to each instrument. (My Translation)



emancipatory experience that creates the possibility where an alternative project can emerge.

If we return to the performance of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* during their tarkas at the *Corso de Corsos*, as suggested earlier, their presence alone, their clothes and the music they play has to be seen as a disruptive act, as a challenge by a critical artistic performance designed to subvert hegemonic and colonial discourses about indigeneity and what Bolivia should look like. By performing Andean autochthonous music they subvert the expectations of what is desirable and worthy of being performed within an urban context that structurally discriminates and oppresses indigenous peoples and their cultural and religious practices. But as I have argued throughout this chapter, and the thesis in general, the practice of Andean autochthonous music is not just a challenge and subversion of the colonial systems of oppression and exclusion. The challenge to engage with the idea of ‘nurturing music and being nurtured by music’ put forward by the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* represents a challenge to the very foundations of what and how to think the world and society functions. Doing so, I suggest that the performance of autochthonous music, if understood as being imbedded within particular religious and cultural practices and cosmologies that are tied to the land,<sup>197</sup> can open up a path that moves beyond mere politics of recognition or identity politics. In this sense, the challenge set by the groups moves along similar lines as those described by Blaser (2014b, 2013b, a) De la Cadena (2010), Escobar (2007) and if engaged seriously can lead us to question our ontological assumptions.

This makes sense of the claim that autochthonous music is ‘more than just music,’ and I suggest that to understand the social change these groups want to bring about, we have to ask what does this ‘Andean worlding process’ entail and look like? In order to start answering this question, the following section looks at the intrinsically religious and ritual nature of Andean instruments and the Andean musical practices. In doing so I map out how nurturing and being nurtured by music can provide a window into an Andean worlding that entails other ways of being and knowing.

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<sup>197</sup> I borrow this formulation from Glen Sean Coulthard (2014).

## 6.2. Nurturing music, nurturing life

To the beat of two large bass drums, two snare drums and the rich and vibrant sound of the *tarkaada* the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* entered the procession of the *Corso de Corsos* in 2014. In a clear reference to five hundred years of colonial resistance, their song was announcing a renewed cycle of struggle for land and coca.

Cinco siglos han pasado,  
Del abuso a nuestro Kollasuyu,  
Por la tierra y por la coca  
Nuestra gente se levanta!  
Ay ya ya yay Pachamama!<sup>198</sup>

The song can be read as an attempt to position the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* within these long traditions of continuous resistance to colonial and republican impositions, exclusions and oppressions. The lyrics, written by Gumerciendo Canaviri<sup>199</sup> of the *Ayllu Ñan* group, directly allude to the long struggle for land, cultural and political recognition by the indigenous and peasant movements and organisations in Bolivia. The *Ayllu Apu-Tunari*'s political vindications were not just made visible and audible during the 2014 *Corso de Corsos* by the songs they sang but also by the choice of their instruments. Following the inherent connection between music and the agricultural cycle means that the choice of the *tarka* for the celebration of the carnival season is not random but dictated by the Andean agricultural and festive calendar. As Copa Choque (2010, 39) observes starting in November around *Todos Santos* (All Saints Day) until the celebration of the Anata in February and March, the unique sound of the *tarkas* enters the soundscape of the high plateau, the valleys, the villages and cities of Andes. The *tarkas* belong to the family of the *pinkillus*, straight flutes with a fipple as a mouthpiece, also referred to as duct flutes. The *pinkillus* are classified among the aerophone instruments and can be found in many different variations made from a range of materials from *toqoro*, a type of bamboo that grows in the Amazon basin, to different types of wood. (Gérard A 2010c, 69) Ethnomusicologist Arnaud Gérard

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<sup>198</sup> Five centuries have passed, // Of the abuse to our Kollasuyu, // For the land and for the coca // Our people are standing up! // Ay ya ya yay Pachama (My translation)

<sup>199</sup> Reference personal communication with WF of Cochabamba.

(2010c, 89-90) describes the sound of the *tarka*, perhaps the most popular instrument of the *pinkillu* family, in the following way:

Se trata de un sonido multifónico con redoble. Es un sonido ronco, estridente gangoso (nasal), con muchos armónicos y parciales, graves y súper agudos discernibles (se escuchan como un conjunto de sonidos diferentes, separables) y además pulsa, se escucha tatatatata..., o RRRRRRRR..., cuando la frecuencia de pulsación es mayor.<sup>200</sup>

The *tarkas*, as most wind instruments of the Andean region, are played in large *tropas* (ensembles).<sup>201</sup> The *tarkas* are generally played in troops of at least 12 musicians playing the *tarkas* and two persons playing a *bombo* and snare drum each. But as Gérard (2010c) shows, the composition of the ensembles varies according to the region, the genre and the taste of the musicians. Over the past decades, four different families of *tarkas*, differentiated by their relative size, ground note and the region where they are played, were established, namely the *Potosinas*, *Salinas*, *Kurawaras* and *Ullaras* in decreasing order of size. (Mamani P. 1987) Each family itself is composed of three differently sized *tarkas*: the largest is called the *tayka*, the middle-sized is called the *malta* or *mala*, and the smallest is called *chuli* or *tiplé*. As both Borrás (2010) and Gérard (2010c) reveal in their work, some *tropas* have introduced a fourth voice in-between the *tayka* and the *malta* called *q'iwa*. For them this 'new' voice within the *tropas* is proof of an active culture and society that is living and cannot be petrified. The Andean musical landscape is an ever changing and adapting site. As is the case with many wind instruments in the Andes, the *tarkas* are played in parallel voices with an interval of a fifth between each voice. (Borrás 2010) The different voices are played simultaneously:

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<sup>200</sup> It is a multiphonic sound with redouble. It is a rusky sound, strident twangy (nasal), with many grave and super shrill discernible harmonics and partials, (heard as a set of different, separable sounds) and it also pulses, and you hear tatatatata ... or RRRRRRRR ... when the frequency of the pulses increases. (My translation)

<sup>201</sup> Fernando Rio (2012, 11) provides the following definition of *tropas*:

"*Tropas* are made up of a single family of melody-producing wind instruments, either one kind of panpipe (e.g., *siku*, *ayarachi* or *jula-jula*), end-notched flute (e.g., *kena* or *phusipía*), duct flute (e.g., *tarka*, *pinkillu* or *mohocño/musiñu*) or side-blown flute (known variously as *pfano*, *phala*, *flauta* or *pitu*), and are usually accompanied by percussion (e.g., *bombos*, *wankaras*, *cajas*). Neither stringed instruments nor soloistic display form part of this village tradition. Each wind player in the *tropa* realizes roughly the same melody, in unison and/or parallel intervals (e.g., octaves, fifths, fourths), producing a dense rather than transparent timbre, largely because the winds traditionally are non-tempered and exhibit considerable tuning variance."

Todos los músicos realizan conjuntamente la misma digitación, lo que da lugar a melodías paralelas en diferentes tonalidades. La voz *tayka* es la voz dominante, da el tono de la melodía, a pesar de que eso no concuerda con el concepto occidental, pues no es la voz superior de la melodía. Por ello se coloca un gran número de *taykas*, y las *malas* y el *tiple* se escuchan muy suavemente, como si fuesen tan sólo componentes estructurales armónicos del sonido.<sup>202</sup> (Gérard A 2010c, 102-103)

The dominance of a voice is usually made manifest through numbers, as Gérard presents in his exhaustive research on the instrument. Most *tropas* are composed of eight or ten *taykas*, one to two *malas* and one to two *chulis*. As said above, this distribution is by no means written in stone. Rather, the compositions of the voices are much more a reflexion of the circumstances where the instruments are played and of the desired type of sound by a given community. (Gérard A 2010c, 111) As mentioned in the quote, the dominance of the *tayka* is due to its numbers as well as to the aesthetic value the musicians attribute to the sound of the instrument. The composition can change either over time, or given a particular festivity and the type of music that is played. Because the different voices simultaneously play ‘parallel melodies in different tonalities’ (Gérard A 2010c, 102) and given the qualities of the sound made by instruments described above, Gérard conceives the music of the *tarkas* as a global sound – a global sound where the *tayka* provides the ground melody and the other voices add additional harmonics and sounds to the global sound. Different compositions of the voices have a profound impact on the global sound produced by the musicians. Gérard (2010c, 117) describes it in this way:

Por tanto, la composición de la tropa es trascendental. Este Balance, este volumen, yo diría esta densidad relativa de las diferentes voces le da el colorido, el toque acústico a la tropa. Sistemáticamente es la *tayka* que da la melodía y las demás voces son como aumentar armónicos y parciales al sonido global del conjunto. Pues como se analizó el sonido de la *tarka/anata* es multifónico, se escucha como un “paquete” de

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<sup>202</sup> All musicians together perform the same fingering, leading to parallel melodies in different tonalities. The *tayka* voice is the dominant voice, it sets the tone of the melody, even though it does not match the Western concept, as it is not the superior voice of the melody. This is why a large number of *taykas* are placed, and the *malas* and the *tiple* are heard very softly, as if they were only structural harmonic components of the sound. (My translation)

sonidos, y este “paquete” se lo completa con otros sonidos, que actúan no como instrumentos separados sino como nuevos componentes del anterior sonido. Se lo puede componer para que tenga más octava o crear batimientos con la octava (octava baja u octava alta del *ch’ili/tiple*), [...] es construir un sonido global donde uno puede elegir los armónicos, es decir, es un manejo matizado del timbre, y cada comunidad elabora el balance de su gusto, pero también, y a manera de ser original, de resaltar y de ganar la competencia en el carnaval. Por tanto, este colorido es a modo de marca étnica e identitaria, un modo de distinguirse, es como diferenciaciones sutiles en los tejidos, como cambiar o agregar un color en una línea de llijlla o del poncho.<sup>203</sup>

The music has to be understood in its totality, where all the musicians are contributing to a single global sound. The dominance of a voice is thus not determined by the superiority or singularity of its instrument, nor by the talent of the musician playing an instrument. The dominance comes from the fact that the instrument, in this case the *tayka*, is chosen to set the ground tone of the song and the event. The composition of the music thus suggests an inherent horizontal relation between the different voices, where every voice has to fulfil a particular function/job. This implies that all the voices can be dominant if the song and occasion requires. The different voices are thus complementary indispensable and equivalent to each other in the creation of the global sound. There is no superior voice, no superior musician, no solo. All the musicians play the same melody, the same fingering, producing together a global sound. In this sense, Turino suggests the constant repetition and the communal nature of the performance within the context of the festival helps reinforce and maintain community itself.

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<sup>203</sup> Therefore, the composition of the tropas is transcendental. This Balance, this volume, I would say this relative density of the different voices gives the coloring, the acoustic touch to the tropas. Systematically it is the *tayka* that gives the melody and the other voices are like increasing harmonics and partial to the overall global sound. For as the analysed sound of the *tarka/anata* is multiphonic, it is heard as a "package" of sounds, and this "package" is so full with other sounds, not acting as separate instruments but as new components of the previous sound. It can be composed to have an octave more or create beats with the octave (a low octave or a higher octave of the *ch’ili / tiple*), [...] the task is to build a global sound where you can choose harmonics, ie, it is a nuanced handling of timbre, and each community draws up the balance of its taste but also as a way to be original, to highlight and to win the competition at the carnival. Therefore, this colouring is a way of marking ethnic and identity, it is a way to distinguish, it like the subtle differentiations in tissues, such as changing or adding a colour in a line of the *llijlla* or the *poncho*. (My translation)

Music and dance bring the state of being in sync—of being together—to a heightened level of explicitness. With each repetition of a piece in Conima, the possibility of “*being in sync*” is extended and the social union is intensified, contributing to an affective intensity. In such contexts, extended repetition does not lead to boredom; it is the basis of aesthetic power. Not unlike making love, music and dance open the possibility for deeper physical and spiritual connections between community members. During special moments, culturally specific rhythms and forms of movement are not merely semiotic expressions of community and identity; rather, *they become their actual realization*. (Turino 1993, 111 emphasis in original)

The practice of music in the Andes from the very way the instruments are constructed, tuned and the desired sound is constructed, implies a communal practice specifically designed to bring people together and create a sense of complementarity. The music is thus a site where the community gets reaffirmed, where values such as reciprocity and complementarity get practiced and taught. Following van den Berg I suggest that music in the Andean festive cycle is not just about bringing the community together or as a decoration or an ornament that is designed to provoke common emotions. Rather he suggests as the quote shows, music has to be thought of as constitutive of the Andean landscape itself.

Tocar música dentro del contexto de las actividades y ritos agrícolas no es simplemente una [sic] acto de divertimento; no se trata de dar realce a estas actividades o ritos. Más bien, es otro esfuerzo más para garantizar una buena cosecha y para que la vida continúe. Y, para que este esfuerzo sea eficaz, hay que prepararse, hay que ensayar para lograr la combinación más perfecta. Esta preparación comienza con el enfrentamiento con el Sirinu: se trata, nuevamente, de un medir de fuerzas. Al concentrarse totalmente, al desplegar toda su energía y valor, el músico puede conseguir que lleguen a su instrumento los tonos y las melodías que, sacados en el momento oportuno, puedan

contribuir a que los campos produzcan lo necesario para vivir y seguir existiendo.<sup>204</sup> (van den Berg 1990, 132)

Paraphrasing Blaser's (2013a, 552) work, music in this context has a worldmaking effect, as such it is a key element within the ritual practice, directly contributing to the production and maintenance of life itself. Thus the capacity to bring about a desirable world is dependent on the proficiency of the musicians to produce the right sounds and melodies at the right time. In a similar manner to what Blaser (2013a, 552) defines as 'storied performativity', the music and the dances in the Andean religious festivities context "partake in the performance of that which they narrate." As the following interview excerpt with a member of the urban autochthonous group *Wiñay Marka* of La Paz observes:

Todo momento siempre tiene su expresión musical ¿no? de acuerdo a la región, de acuerdo al lugar. Entonces, es importante un eje transversal [de la] muerte, nacimiento, chacra... todo tiene su música, todo tiene su canto aquí en las comunidades occidentales de Bolivia. [...] Hay tonos para la llama, llamo, hay tono para el chanco, para la oveja, para la quinua, para la papa. Todos tienen sus tonos y esos cantos son también como plegaria, con agradecimiento, con mucha poesía, con mucha belleza.<sup>205</sup>

As such, the selection of the right instrument and sound, the right melody are not just trivial questions, but rather are important considerations as from it depends the success or failure the performance and worlding process can have. This notion of the purpose and effect each sound, melody and instrument is bestowed with is further explained by Stobart, in his accounts of the ritual practices in Kalankira.

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<sup>204</sup> To play music within the context of the activities and agricultural rituals is not simply an act to have fun, neither is to highlight these activities or rituals. Rather, it is an additional effort to guarantee a good harvest so that life may continue. So that this effort is effective, one has to prepare oneself, one has to practice in order to achieve the most perfect combination. This preparation starts with the encounter of the Sirinu: once again it is about measuring the strength. When completely concentrating, when deploying all their energy and valour, the musician can manage to bring to his instrument the sounds and melodies that produced in the right moment can contribute to the fields producing what's necessary to live and to continue to exist. (My translation)

<sup>205</sup> Every moment always has its own musical expression right?, according to the region, according to the place. In that sense it is important, it is a transverse axis, [of] death, birth, chacra... everything has its music, everything has its song here in the western communities of Bolivia. There are sounds for the female and male llamas, there are sounds for the pig, for the sheep, for the quinoa, for the potato. Everything has its sounds, and those chants are also like prayers with gratitude, with a lot of poetry, and are very beautiful. (My translation) Interview with VCM 02.04.2014.

Relatively little music-making takes place outside the context of feasts. Yet, during such festivals, when music is played almost constantly, musical performance is one of the principal means through which people come together and are actualised as a community. However, with different musical genres and moments in the seasonal cycle ‘community’ comes to mean different things. For example, during the rainy growing season, which is defined musically (but only loosely by actual weather conditions) as November (All Saints) to March (Carnival), the focus tends to be on the immediate hamlet. Thus, during Carnival, dancing and singing to the hamlet’s pinkillu flute consort is usually performed in the llama corral of each family’s homestead. (Stobart 2002, 88)

In this sense the worldmaking capabilities bestowed on the instruments, and melodies play as important a part in bringing about the changes the community seeks, as do other rituals and prayers. The following section looks at music and the ritual practices within the context of the celebrations of the *Anata* (in Aymara) or *Phujllay* (in Quechua). This will allow me to better flesh out the ‘Andean world’ that is being evoked throughout this chapter.

### 6.2.1. *Anata* Celebration of life: Music and the agricultural cycle

The *Anata* also known as *Phujllay* (‘play’) is a festivity that celebrates life and is related to the pre-harvest, where the *Pachamama* and the *Wak’as* (also referred to as *huacas*), *Apus*, *Achachilas* and *Awichas* are thanked for their help and endorsement leading towards a hopefully successful harvest. Olivia Harris (1982, 57) observed in her study of the Laymi people in the Bolivian Andes that “[t]he end of the rains is celebrated at Carnival (February/March) which is the most important feast of the Laymi year, singled out from all others, and marking both the First Fruits and the New Year. Its name in Aymara is *Anata*, the time of play”. Hans van den Berg (1990, 130), in his influential book on Andean agricultural and ritual practices, provides a similar description of the *Anata* as being a playful and joyful pre-harvest celebrations. Van den Berg (1990, 138-139 ) further describes the celebration in the following manner:



El primer destinatario de los ritos de la pre-cosecha es Anata, una figura bastante vaga, que no aparece en ningún otro contexto ritual. Es viejo y joven al mismo tiempo. Viejo porque parece pertenecer al círculo de los Achachilas [...]. Y joven porque viene cada año de nuevo, identificándose con los tiernos productos de los campos y con los jóvenes que están por casarse. [...]

Viene a recoger o reunir su *mara ququ*, su 'fiambre del año', y lo hace de diferentes maneras. En primer lugar, por medio de los participantes en la fiesta, que comen y beben copiosamente por él. En segundo lugar aprovechando las peleas pacíficas que se hacen en la fiesta[.]<sup>206</sup> (van den Berg 1990, 138-139)

The *Anata*, thus marks the transition of old and new, in particular in the fields it celebrates the birth of new plants and seedlings for the coming year. The figure of the *Anata* himself, as van den Berg remarks here is a contested figure, that is also associated by scholars with the figure of the *Sirinu*, who among other things is strongly linked with the practice of music. (Gérard A 2010a, INDICEP 2010 (1973)) The *Anata*, according to Turinos (1993, 106) observation in Conima in the Peruvian Andes, is one of the most important celebrations of the year:

There is a general consensus however, that Todos los Santos (November 1 and 2; see chapter 9) and Carnival are the most important festivals in Conima. All communities participate in these two occasions [...]. Carnival is more strictly tied up with the agricultural cycle and with the rainy season itself.

The *Anata* is the largest and most important pre-harvest ritual of the year. From the celebration of the *Candelaria* (Candlemas on 2 February) onwards, the different families go to each of the fields in order evaluate the state of the crop and to perform a series of rituals to guarantee a successful harvest. Even though this evaluation is a moment of concern and worry, as it will tell the fortune or the problems to come,

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<sup>206</sup> The first recipient of the pre-harvest rites is Anata, a rather vague figure who does not appear in any other ritual context. He is old and young at the same time. Old because he seems to belong to the circle of the Achachilas [...]. And young because he comes every year again, identifying himself with the tender products of the fields and with the young people who are about to get married. [...] He comes to collect or gather his *mara ququ*, his 'provisions for the year', and he does it in different ways. First, through the participants in the party, who eat and drink copiously for him. Secondly taking advantage of the peaceful fights that take place during the festival [.] (My translation)

nevertheless van den Berg further argues that the Andean men and women “quieren ser más optimistas que pesimistas: cada año lo manifiestan en la fiesta que se llama *Anata* ‘juego’”<sup>207</sup> (van den Berg 1990, 130), consolidating this idea of the *Anata* as a joyful festivity, a celebration of life and the beginning of a new cycle.<sup>208</sup>

The celebrations coincide with the celebration of Carnival within the Christian festive calendar,<sup>209</sup> and as such the festivities take place at some point during the month of February or the first fortnight of March. The *Anata* is composed by a series of different rituals spread out over the course of a week. The celebrations traditionally take place in the week up to the *Domingo de tentación* (Sunday of temptation or first Sunday of Lent) or the following Monday. The importance of the *Anata* within the Andean festive calendar derives from its role as a moment marking the end of one cycle and the birth of a new one. It marks the moment when the potatoes from the previous year give way to the new fruits. The *Anata* is also supposed to be a changing point concerning the weather: while the rain was desired during the development of the crop, for the harvest the Andean men and women ask for a drier climate. The festivities of the *Anata* often extend over the course of a week. As Turino (1993, 107) observes for the case of Conima: “During these days, competition among the different villages’ musical and dance ensembles mounts to a head. Each ensemble is accompanied in the plaza by people from the same community who come to dance, drink, and celebrate.” Over the days a series of public and private rituals are executed within the different villages and families. Turner (1993, 110) further remarks that the festive behaviour in Conima as an intensification of everyday activities:

Sustaining the celebration over many days is crucial for reaching a high level of intensity, and for opening the way to various types of special experiences. [...] Festivals also allow for the private thought, desires, feelings, and strategies of individuals—which are just as real and “every-day,” albeit usually hidden—to become public and to be acted out in a variety of ways (drunken fistfights, lovemaking and elopement, the donning of special clothing to become belle of the ball).

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<sup>207</sup> “Want to be more optimists than pessimists: each year they manifest this during the festivities that are called *Anata* ‘play.’ (My translation)

<sup>208</sup> For a similar description see also Gérard (2010a).

<sup>209</sup> For a more substantive analysis of Carnival celebrations within Christianity see Harris (2010).

Ritual festivals such as the *Anata* are important moments where the bonds between the community members can be reinforced and nurtured, but also the festivities provide a space where differences, and conflicts can be displayed and resolved. The festive context thus reproduces in many ways the life, the everyday, albeit in condensed and more intense way. Turino thus continues:

These special possibilities and the interruption of the everyday are still not the whole story, because fiesta behaviour is also modelled on, and is often an intensified version of, patterns of everyday social style, relationships, and beliefs. [...] Community, family, and coparent relationships, which are important in daily life, become intensified as well as tested and perhaps altered during festivals. During fiestas, individuals play out, communicate about, and manipulate “everyday” social positions and roles; fiestas are public occasions to enhance, cement, or diminish prestige, to fulfil or fail in one’s duty to community. A persons successes and failures during fiestas affect his or her social position after the festival is over. (Turino 1993, 110)

Beside these more functional explanations of the role festivals can have within the Andean agricultural festive cycle, as I have suggested above, celebrations as the *Anata* are deeply embedded within the religious and ritual context of the different Andean communities. In this sense, their purpose is not just to improve community life, rather celebrations, dances, music and other rituals are essential to the maintenance of life itself. As a result the rituals and festivities in general are addressed to the local divine entities, thanking them and asking them for their support and goodwill with the coming harvest. As van den Berg (1990, 15-16) remarks:

la religión aymara, de la cual los ritos agrícolas son una parte muy importante, es una totalidad que está en directa relación con la vida del campesino y que recibe su expresión, también, en una cosmovisión que, a su vez, está en relación coherente con esa vida. Cuando no se advierte esa totalidad y esa coherencia, difícilmente se puede entender los diferentes ritos o detalles de los mismos.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> the Aymara religion, of which agricultural rites are a very important part, it is a totality that is directly related to the life of the peasant and which, also, receives its expression in a worldview that,

The different ritual, festive, agricultural elements are part of a broader overarching totality that has to be understood in its complexity. The influential Andean anthropologist Ina Rösing (1994), who specialised in the Kallawaya culture, describes the religious actions in the Andes as being characterised by their offerings, through which one pays tribute and expresses one's desires to the different divine entities. As such, the offerings often take the shape of dishes also referred to as *platos* or *mesas* (or also *misas*) composed of a large variety of different components. Similarly to how we previously mentioned that in the Andes each sound, each melody serves a particular purpose, Rösing suggests that each *mesa* is a distinct composition of ingredients in order to achieve its task. Each ingredient thus used for the *mesa* has a particular purpose, or a particular addressee; as such, each ingredient has its own particular function. Rösing (1994, 196) talks about a symbolic meaning of each ingredient. The offerings are marked by their diversity. This is due to the fact that the Andes are full of different divine entities. They are often associated with particular places within the landscapes, like mountains, summits, waterfalls, lakes, rivers or rock formations but also stones and other features of the landscape. This leads van Kessel and Condori Cruz (1992, 10) to suggest that the Andean world, is an 'animated world.'<sup>211</sup> This leads Astvaldsson (1998, 203-204) to argue that one cannot reduce these sacred spaces or *wak'as* to abstract or inanimate representations of the divine entities:

[T]o suggest that the many places and objects representing Andean deities are not worshipped as such (as stones, mountains, etc.), but because they manifest "something wholly different", is to misunderstand and undermine the complexity of Andean religion. On the contrary, these places and objects are worshipped precisely because they are seen to distinguish themselves from other places and objects, and hence thought to be powerful. While the qualities by which they are distinguished from 'similar things' can be both real and imaginary, they always have a basis in actual perceptions.

The *wak'as* are seen to act as the 'owners' and guardians of the landscape that surrounds them and the wild animals that inhabit it. In other words, the Andean

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in turn, is in a coherent relation with that life. When this totality and coherence is not noticed, it is difficult to understand the different rites or details of them. (My translation)

<sup>211</sup> A similar point is made by Allen (2016).

landscape is one full of sacred spaces. (Cruz 2012) As such they are associated with the power to protect their surroundings and control weather, resources and other goods important to the survival of the Andean communities. Rösing (1994, 193) further argues that these divine entities “de las cimas sagradas y otros lugares sagrados, carecen de figura, no son ni representados iconográficamente ni visualizados conceptualmente.”<sup>212</sup> The Andean divine entities are neither just good nor just bad, although each one of them is attributed with some particular aspects or tendencies; they are largely ambivalent and are seen to react according to any given context or situation.

Humans are related to these entities through their offerings, sacrifices and prayers. Each one of these activities is designed to, in a broad sense, help maintain the relational bonds between both ‘worlds’ open and in equilibrium. The great number of divine entities in the Andean landscape means that a great effort is put in order to establish to whom one should address one’s wishes, offerings and prayers. Throughout the entire ritual, the person responsible (often the *yatiri*, or *healer*) are in constant prayer that resembles more a conversation/dialogue with the different divine entities (Rösing 1994). The prayers invoke the different divine entities as well as the wishes of the participants. They also ask the divine entities to acknowledge the ritual and its offerings. Each prayer, as Rösing (1994, 196) describes, “entre los kallawayas son extensas estrofas de la más hermosa poesía de diálogo con los dioses.”<sup>213</sup>

Given the large number of divine entities and their intertwined relationship with the landscape, this means that the Andean people find themselves in constant interaction and conversation with the sacred world. They have to be able to relate with the different divine entities in the spaces they pass through. The Andean man and woman’s relationship with divine entities are from the beginning unequal. The ambivalent nature of the divine entities means that the humans are concerned with meeting the demands for attention, reverence and offerings through the different rituals—demands that, if they are not met, raise what Rösing calls the ‘debt of offering.’ (Rösing 1994, 200) For her the debt of offering is a key driving rational

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<sup>212</sup> Of the sacred summits and other sacred spaces do not have a figure, they are neither iconographically represented nor conceptually visualised. (My Translation)

<sup>213</sup> “are, among the kallawayas, extensive verses of the most beautiful poetry with the gods.” (My translation)

within Andean religious practices. She defines the debt of offering in the following way:

La deuda de ofrenda no tiene nada que ver con el ser culpable cristiano, no es una categoría moral, significa mucho más: tener deudas indica un déficit del actuar. Estas deudas son acciones concretas y ofrendas concretas: la realización del ritual de sacrificio con el ofrecimiento de todos los nidos de ofrenda e ingredientes, de los fetos de llama y/o de los animales de sacrificio.<sup>214</sup> (Rösing 1994, 200)

In summary, one can argue that the Andean 'sacred world' is an immanent, pragmatic world within which the Andean woman and man are in constant conversation, in particular, if they wish to maintain an always shifting equilibrium with the sacred realm. As a consequence ritual practices and everyday agriculture activities are both part of the everyday life and interactions of the Andean peoples with the divine. The Andean rituals in comparison with Catholic ritual practises are marked by their lack of rigidity and solemnity. The rituals in the Andes are characterised by their convivial nature, laughter, conversations and consumption of food and alcoholic beverages. (Astvaldsson 2000, Burman 2011, Rösing 1994, van den Berg 1990)

The differences between smaller, more private and everyday rituals and larger public events is thus more a question of scale rather than content. The main difference is the type of demands and favours that can be asked. Public rituals are often designed to invoke the necessities for the entire community and maintain the equilibrium and relationality with the Andean landscape. Turino, in the case of the *Anata* or Andean carnival, affirms that to perform the offerings during these festivities means that there is more power associated with the ritual offerings:

The cost and effort entailed in providing food, drink, and coca for the musicians and one's compadres and neighbors is one basis for the heightened significance within the community (that is, the offering is greater). The other is that the presence of the musicians, and the music itself, creates a special festive atmosphere that publicly frames the event and adds importance to the ritual. (Turino 1993, 109)

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<sup>214</sup> The debt of offering has nothing to do with being a guilty Christian, it is not a moral category, it means much more that: having debts indicates a deficit of acting. These debts are concrete actions and concrete offerings: performing the sacrificial ritual with the offering of all offering nests and ingredients, llama foetuses and/or animals sacrifices. (My translation)

In this sense, music and dance have to be understood as constitutive elements of the offerings and rituals. As much as the other elements of the rituals, music and dance are seen to symbolise and invoke the sacred entities as well as the wishes and demands. In this context the different elements such as music and dance are constitutive elements that allow for the relations between the worlds of the humans and the sacred to be maintained and nourished. In this sense they are constitutive elements of the relations that maintain the Andean world alive. A world that according to Grillo Fernandez is one of equivalence and complementarity:

In our world we live equivalence of the diverse, the heterogeneous, because here the mosquito, the frog, the frost, the hail, the fox, the human, the mountain, the river, the stars are all indispensable in the delicate nurturance of our harmony; because only this, our exuberant diversity knows how to nurture our harmony, the one that belongs here, the one which knows how to nurture us. (Grillo Fernández 1998, 128)

In a similar sense to the quote above, the fox, the human, the mountain and all the other beings of the Andes are all part of a whole, and as such they are indispensable and equivalent in their contribution and responsibility in the nurturance of harmony. Grimaldo Rengifo Vásquez (1998), similarly pushes the notion of equivalence within an Andean conception of the world further. For him,

[t]his feeling of equivalency finds its roots in the interpenetrability of the various forms of life. Within each form of life (for example of *runa*) live also other forms (*sallqa* and *huacas*), so that all share similar attributes and perceive each other as similar. In this way of life, the presence of the 'Other' does not make its appearance as something distant and different from oneself. (Rengifo Vásquez 1998, 98)

In the Andes, both Rengifo Vasquez and Grillo Fernandez argue, the community, the *ayllu* is not centred around the humans' perspective or experience of it. Rather Rengifo Vasquez maintains that all beings contribute and are responsible to nurture harmony; for him equivalence comes from an inherent deep relationality between all living beings, in the sense that the existence of any being is constituted and can only exist through their relations with other beings. In this, humans (*runa/jaqi*), *waq'as*, animals or plants exist through their relationship and in constant interaction

(conversation) with each other. Josef Estermann (2006, 108-109) explains it this way:

En la filosofía andina, se da el caso [...] de la 'relación sin relata', la 'relación sustancial', la 'relación como arjé.' En otras palabras: todo es relación y relatum a la vez. La relacionalidad le es 'esencial' e inherente al relatum, y no algo que le 'acae' (accidental) en forma de casual. Lo que la ontología occidental llama "ente" ('sustancia' en sentido aristotélico), para la racionalidad andina es un 'nudo' de relaciones, un punto de transición, una concentración relacional. Una piedra (rumi/qata), por ejemplo, no es simplemente un 'ente' separado y existente en sí mismo, sino el 'punto de concentración' de ciertas relaciones de 'fuerza' y 'energía'.<sup>215</sup>

According to these authors it is this constitutive relationality and equivalence, which sets the ground from where the Andeans, the *runa*, the *jaqi* make sense of the world that surrounds them. This drives Estermann (2006, 130) to conclude that all beings, humans, plants, mountains, rivers, animals in the Andean world are essential but not necessary. Van Kessel and Condori Cruz further suggest that as a result the *runa* and the *jaqi* have a responsibility to care, nurture and respect the world around them:

El mundo es un todo vivo, un mundo-animal, que le exige respeto y cariño. Su trabajo es cultivar la vida del mundo en la chacra, el ganado, la casa. La tierra, llamada Pachamama, es divina y es la madre universal de la vida. Ella es su madre. Concretamente, la chacra es fuente de vida divina y sus frutos son vivos. La chacra y todo lo que ella representa, desde la semilla y la planta hasta la cosecha, merecen un trato de respeto y cariño y exigen una dedicación responsable. El trabajo es más que una simple actividad productiva; es un culto religioso a la vida.<sup>216</sup> (van Kessel and Condori Cruz 1992, 4)

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<sup>215</sup> In Andean philosophy it is the case [...] the 'relationship without relata' the 'substantial relation', the 'relation as arche'. In other words, everything is relation and relatum at the same time. Relationality is 'essential' and inherent to relatum, not something that 'acae' (accidental) as casual. What Western ontology called "entity" ("substance" in the Aristotelian sense) to the Andean rationality is a 'knot' of relations, a point of transition, a relational concentration. A stone (rumi / qata), for example, is not simply a 'being' separate and self-existent, but the 'rallying point' of certain relations of 'strength' and 'energy'. (My translation)

<sup>216</sup> The world is a living entity, an animal-world that demands respect and care [affect]. His [Andean man] work is to cultivate the chacra, the cattle, the house. The earth called Pachamama, is divine and is the universal mother of life. She is her own mother. More specifically, the chacra is the source of



Religious practices, social and political practices, agricultural cycles, music and dance are all elements that are informed and given sense through their interaction with each other, and have to be made sense of through their interactions. As a result, they are all co-constitutive of each other. This becomes evident if in the study of the relations between the music, the instruments and the Andean cosmologies and philosophies we include the ritual relations between agricultural practices and its festivities.

### 6.2.2. Sirinus, wayñus and the birth of a new life

Returning to the *Anata*, the celebrations as mentioned earlier, turn around the harvest and the new cycle of crops that the harvest brings about. In this sense, the celebrations and rituals mark the moment when the seeds that were planted in November give life to the new generation of fruits that will themselves become seeds and give birth to a new generation of plants. This is made very clear by the researchers of INDICEP in their often mentioned study of Carnival practices in the Andes when they explain that:

*Anata Wayna*, el Carnaval Nuevo, llega al campo prodigando abundancia a los campesinos *aymarás*, con él la papa nueva, la quinua, las flores, las mariposas [...]. Para entonces, se prepara una mesa familiar con papa nueva, habas, frutos traídos del valle o los yungas, confites, coca, una botella de alcohol, adornos de mixturas y serpentinas. Se sirve un plato especial, la *ulla*, preparado con *palillusa* (cúrcuma), que se invita los días de fiesta. El día Domingo de Tentación, se despide a *Anata Wayna*, guardando las *tarkas* hasta la fiesta de Todos los Santos, porque el Carnaval Viejo, *Achachi Anata*, debe dar paso al Carnaval Nuevo.<sup>217</sup> (INDICEP 2010 (1973), 348)

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the divine life and its fruits are living. The chacra and everything it represents, from the seeds and the plant to the harvest, they all deserve to be treated with respect and affect, and demand a responsible dedication. Work is more than a simple productive activity, it is a religious worship to life. (My translation)

<sup>217</sup> *Anata Wayna*, the New Carnival, arrives in the countryside lavishing abundance on the Aymara peasants, and with him the new potato, quinoa, flowers and butterflies [...]. For that occasion, a family table with new potatoes, faba beans, fruits brought from the valley or the yungas, comfits, coca, a bottle of alcohol, ornaments of confetti and serpentine are prepared. A special dish, the *ulla*,

The rituals and festivities organised over this time aim to help this transition through a series of libations, music and dance, as well as large offerings, collective celebrations and the exhaustive consumption of food and alcoholic beverages (Copa Choque 2010, INDICEP 2010 (1973), van den Berg 1990, 130-141, Zegarra Choque 2010). Birth and rebirth are not just invoked in the different *mesas* and rituals performed, but are also reflected in the way the music, dance and instruments are approached. In particular the *wayñu*, a widespread type of music, plays an important role during the celebrations of the *Anata*. Stobart (Stobart 2010a, 210) writes in this regard: “En resumen, las nuevas melodías del wayñu marcan el arribo de una nueva generación de papas debajo del suelo, que crece en fuerza con la declinación de la planta padre.”<sup>218</sup> The rituals and the music are inseparable elements of the *Anata*. Their correct performance is not just important because it represents the relationship between humans and nature or divine entities, but because they are constitutive elements to the maintenance of life in the Andes. (van den Berg forthcoming)

As Gérard (2010a, 332-337) remarks during the celebrations of the *Anata*, many of the rituals and libation offered are made for the *Pachamama* calling for her support for the coming harvest as well as for the livestock. But as he further explains the *Pachamama* is not the only divine entity invoked during the rituals and celebrations of the *anata*.

Y por otra parte el *Sirinu*, espíritu de la música que luego se vuelve el *Anata/Phujllay*, *saxra* dueño del carnaval para el cual se efectúan juegos rituales y ritos protectores. No obstante esta dualidad [entre la *Pachamama* y el *Sirinu*] proviene de un discurso ambiguo y difuso, nunca se sabe a ciencia cierta si el rito es a la *Pachamama* o si es al *Sirinu* o si es al *Anata/Phujllay* de carnaval.<sup>219</sup> (Gérard A 2010a, 332)

The figure of the *Sirinu* or *Anata* invokes precisely the transitional element of the celebration being both young and old at the same time. This figure of the *Anata* is

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prepared with *palillusa* (turmeric), is served during the days of the feast. On the Sunday of Temptation, *Anata Wayna* is seen off, and the *tarkas* are put away until the celebration of All Saints, because the Old Carnival, *Achachi Anata*, has to give way to the New Carnival. (My translation)

<sup>218</sup> “In short, the new melodies of the wayñu mark the arrival of a new generation of potatoes under the ground, which grows in strength with the decline of the parent plant.” (My translation)

<sup>219</sup> On the other hand, the *Sirinu*, spirit of the music who later becomes *Anata/Phujllay*, *saxra* the keeper of the carnival, for whom ritual games and protective rites are carried out. Despite this duality [between the *Pachamama* and the *Sirinu*] comes out of an ambiguous and vague discourse, one never knows with certain science if the rite is for the *Pachamama* or if it is for the *Anata/Phujllay* of carnival. (My translation)

seen to embody the transition of the crop from 'old' to 'new'. But opposed to other divine entities, and other *Achachilas*, *Awichas* or *Awkis* who are rather associated with large geographical structures,<sup>220</sup> the figure of the *Sirinu*, as stated above, remains an ambiguous entity. As Gérard later remarks, in many cases there is no clear distinction or transition between the *Sirinu* and the *Anata*. Referencing the son of an instrument maker of the Andes, he writes that:

el *Sirinu* y el *Anata* [...] son lo mismo. Acá la ambigüedad es total. Se venera el cerro, como *Achachila*, en la cima se pronuncia el nombre de todas las vírgenes protectoras [...] y se hacen ritos a los *juturis*, aguajeros en la montaña, que son las bocas de los *Sirinus*, espíritus dadores de la música que a poco rato se vuelven el *Anata* de carnaval.<sup>221</sup>

(Gérard A 2010a, 334)

In this sense the veneration of the *Sirinu* also varies, the offerings have to do with the *Sirinu's* function as 'giver' of music. His cycle of activity in this sense is also the cycle of music. And as I have discussed his presence is often related with the festivities of carnival, where the function of the *Sirinu* as a bridge between worlds is seen to be particularly important. As Stobart (2010a, 210) further explains:

Estas prácticas no sólo resaltan la forma en que las melodías del wayño están íntimamente identificadas con la generación específica de las cosechas de alimentos, como si representaran la verdadera sustancia de su alma o la energía que las alimenta, sino que también enfatiza el rol del *Sirinu* al permitir la creación de nueva vida. Los *Sirinus* aparecen en el momento crítico cuando una generación abre el camino, o da lugar, a la próxima generación a través del sonido musical, haciendo girar la nueva vida de los remanentes de la generación anterior. En la misma forma que la cascada, de la que hablamos anteriormente, ellos actúan como una transición entre distintas sendas en la vida, sus poderes seductores que conectan musicalmente las

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<sup>220</sup> For a more detailed account of the relation between the *Achachilas*, *Awichas*, and *Awkis* and the landscape they inhabit see for instance the work by Mercado Lazarte (2004) or of Astvaldsson (1998).

<sup>221</sup> the *Sirinu* and the *Anata* [...] are the same. Here the ambiguity is total. The mountain is worshiped as *Achachila*, on the summit the names of all the guardian virgins are spoken out, and rituals are performed to the *juturis*, mountain springs, which are the mouths of the *Sirinus*, spirits who give music, who soon becomes the [figure of] *Anata* of carnival. (My translation)

generaciones de cultivos, los antepasados y los seres vivos, e incitan las relaciones amorosas entre los hombres y las mujeres.<sup>222</sup>

The music is directly connected with the cycles of the plants. The music not only mimics the transition of the old into the new, rather it invokes it. Every year a new *wayñu* composition is played during the *Anata* and accompanies in many cases the new generation of fruits throughout its yearly cycle, until it will be replaced in the following year by a new composition. The case of the *Anata* provides a vivid example of the close relationship between humans, the divine entities and the agricultural cycles. In particular, if we observe in more detail the role of the *Sirinu*, or also *Sereno* or *Sirina*, a recurring divine entity when it comes to the *Anata* and music more generally, at least throughout the Bolivian Andes. As the quote of Stobart above describes, the *Sirinu* is seen as a driving force behind the growth and development of the crops and as such plays an important role within the rituals of the Andes. The music and the instruments are essential elements in the maintenance of this cycle, where it is the same *Sirinu*, who provides the instruments and the musicians with the music for the year. Despite the *Sirinu's* central role, he remains an ambivalent and ambiguous character as mentioned above. Van den Berg(1990, 131)provides this description of the *sirinu*:

[El] Sirinu (castellano: 'sereno') o Sirinu mallku, [es] un espíritu generalmente considerado como peligroso, que es el dueño de las melodías y sabe transmitirlas a los instrumentos. Para que sus instrumentos sean templados o 'serenados', los músicos tienen que enfrentarse con el Sirinu, lo que de ninguna manera es fácil y requiere de todas sus fuerzas.<sup>223</sup>

The *Sirinu* is the owner of the melodies, he is a crucial figure that through his melodies helps to invoke the different cycles. As such he is seen as an entity which

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<sup>222</sup> These practices not only highlight the way in which the melody of the *wayñu* are intimately identified with the specific generation of food crops, as representing the true substance of their soul or the energy that feeds them, but also emphasises the role of the *Sirinu* allowing for the creation of new life. The *Sirinu* appear at the critical moment when one generation opens the way, or gives place, to the next generation through the musical sound, turning the new life of the remnants of the previous generation. In the same way as the waterfall, of which we spoke earlier, they act as a transition between different paths in life, their seductive powers that connect generations of crops, ancestors and living things musically, and they incite love relationships between men and women.

<sup>223</sup> The *Sirinu* (spanish: 'sereno') or *Sirinu mallku*, [is] a spirit generally considered to be dangerous, who is the keepers of the melodies and who knows how to pass them onto the instruments. So that their instruments are tuned or 'serenaded,' the musicians have to confront the *Sirinu*, this is under no circumstance easy and requires all their strength. (My translation)

can bridge between different worlds, cycles and ages, binding the different worlds together. Accordingly he is usually associated with waterfalls, mountains, springs or rivers (Copa Choque 2010, 58), generally all places associated with connections between the different realms. The instruments and the music more than just represent these bridges. Rather, one can argue that they are bestowed with these bridging abilities. In order to obtain the melodies, the instruments and the musicians are brought to these places, which the *Sirinu* inhabits. Through a series of rituals and offerings the musicians ask for the support and goodwill of the *Sirinu*. As Copa Choque (2010, 59) remarks, it is through these offerings that the musicians establish a dialogue with the *Sirinu*:

De esta manera, el músico entabla una comunicación con el Sirinu, no sólo se trata de pedir wayñus (músicas), sino que en toda la semana de la fiesta no haya ningún problema, ninguna desgracia y tampoco ninguna discusión entre vecinos.<sup>224</sup>

The musician, through his instrument and the *wayñu* that is played, is therefore a vital element within the maintenance of the cycle. The music thus fulfils different functions, creating relations between the humans and the divine entities, and invoking the transition from one cycle to the next. It is also seen to infuse the plants with a spirit that will allow them to grow. In other words, through music, offerings, rituals and celebrations the community the growth and abundance they are asking for is conjured:

Los Sirinus y sus melodías conectan las generaciones y median las relaciones cambiantes de las estaciones entre los mundos de los vivientes y de sus antepasados, anunciando nueva vida y escoltando a los muertos al alma llajta (“el mundo/pueblo de las almas”).<sup>225</sup> (Stobart 2010a, 212)

Taking up a point made earlier by van den Berg, Andean religious practices have to be understood as part of an encompassing totality, where the different elements, participants and divine entities are interrelated with each other.

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<sup>224</sup> This way, the musician strikes up a conversation with the *Sirinu*, it is not only about asking for wayñus (music), but also that there is no problem, no misfortune during the entire week of fiesta and no discussion among neighbours. (My translation)

<sup>225</sup> The *Sirinus* and their melodies connect the generations and mediate the changing relations of the seasons, [mediate between] the worlds of the living and that of their ancestors, heralding the new life and escorting the dead to the alma llajta (“the world/village of the souls”). (My translation)

### 6.3. Moving towards an 'other-wise'

Rituals, offerings, music, dance in the Andean context, as argued earlier in this chapter, cannot be reduced and interpreted purely as attempts to advance a politics of recognition of the Indigenous movements. The centuries of colonial rule, were marked by their systematic and continuous attempts to eradicate the different Andean religious, political, social and cultural practices and replace them with the practices and beliefs of the colonisers. As a consequence, the practice of music, for instance, or the execution of different rituals and maintenance of certain religious practices are also invocations of a different world and social order of different worlding processes. In this sense, to nurture Andean autochthonous music as the members of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* claim on the one hand situates them within this particular political and historical context of anti-colonial resistance, on the other hand, to nurture Andean autochthonous music which I have suggested in this chapter are also irruptions and evocations of an 'Andean' order, and Andean worlding processes in the urban context. In other words, Andean music and the agricultural festive cycle are attached to and reflect the values, ideals and social practices of the different Andean cultures. In this sense, I have argued through the example of the *tarka* and the celebration of the *Anata* that Andean musical practices carry within them the world of which they are a constitutive part.

As I have discussed the desired sound and melodies only emerge out of the interaction and the equivalence of the different voices. Each one voice, each instrument is important in the composition of the global sound but not necessary. That is since each event, each circumstance requires its own sound, each context necessitates its particular composition of different voices in order to achieve the pertinent sound and melody. The Andean world, as the *tarka*, is a world where different beings (voices) are in constant relation and conversation with each other. All beings are equivalent and as such play part in the maintenance of what Rengifo and Grillo call harmony, in the same way that all voices contribute to the global sound. Van den Berg (1990, 157-158) in a similar sense argues that:

La cosmovisión aymara se ha formado en base a la experiencia y la percepción del universo como una totalidad. Kusch ha definido el cosmos aymara como "una totalidad orgánica", como "algo orgánico,

total". [...] Dentro de esta realidad concebida como totalidad, todos los elementos o componentes están en una relación mutua[.]<sup>226</sup>

The importance and dominance of one voice is contextual, and always changing. It is the result of particular configurations and global sounds that want to be created. The same follows for the relationship between humans, stones, mountains, rivers and foxes. There is no natural hierarchy, no self-evident dominance of one form of being over another. They are all part of the same ensemble and contribute in their own ways, but in relation and constant conversation with each other, towards harmony, the *Ayllu*, the *Chakra*, the *Apus*, *Achachilas*, *Awichas*. Summarising, the composition of the music thus reflects an inherent horizontal relation between the different voices, where each voice has to fulfil a particular function/job. The composition of the ensemble can change either over time, or given a particular festivity and the type of music that is played. There is no superior voice, no superior musician, no solo. All the musicians play the same melody, producing together a global sound. The different voices are thus necessary and equivalent to each other in the creation of the global sound. The principles of relationality, equivalence and harmony are engraved in the very fabric of the instruments. The music is a site where the community gets reaffirmed, where values such as reciprocity and complementarity get practiced and taught. The Andean world is a relational world, a world in constant conversation within itself and with other worlds. It is a world where one constantly nurtures and is being nurtured, a world guided by agricultural cycles, in constant construction of what Rengifo Vásquez (1998) calls harmony. It is not a utopian harmony set in a transcendental moment; rather, harmony is strived for and has to be nurtured constantly in every cycle. In the harsh and ever-changing world of the Andes, with all its extremes and delicate ecosystems, there is no time to think of a world 'as it should be'; what is important is the world 'as it is' (in every moment of the different cycles). (Grillo Fernández 1998, Rengifo Vásquez 1998)

The sounds of the *tarka*, the melodies of the *wayñu*, the dancing and the rituals performed throughout the *Corso de Corsos* are evoking a new life, celebrating the new cycle, while also dispatching the old cycle and the old fruits. If this is the case, then

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<sup>226</sup> The Aymara cosmovision has been formed based on the experience and perception of the universe as a totality. Kusch has defined the Aymara cosmos as "an organic totality," as "something organic, total" [...] Within this reality understood as a totality, all the elements or components are in mutual relation[.] (My translation)

they are challenging the colonial order both on the material as well as on the cosmological level, re-establishing relations and connections denied and destroyed through hundreds of years of colonial oppression. The *wayñuw* are invoking the *sirinu* to blow back life into the landscape. Each time they enter the city, the *tarkas* are re-familiarising the urban landscape, establishing its relations with the earth and its people, and evoking those cycles that are vital for a *allin kawsay* or good life. The *Anata Andino* is evoking a new beginning, with every step it is recreating an Andean Aymara order within the city of Oruro, bringing about a cosmic revolution also known as *pachakuti*.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> *Pachakuti* is often translated as ‘return of time’ or ‘cosmic revolution.’



## Chapter 7: “We play music for the *Pachamama*, the *Apus*, the *Awichas*, to give breath to the earth and to life.”

My first encounter with members of the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* was on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2013, when I attended a national meeting between urban communities, cultural centres and autochthonous music groups in Cochabamba. The event brought together musicians from all over the country, from both urban and rural backgrounds. After a small breakfast, the day started with a *q'uwa* prepared by two Kallawaya healers from Charazani, La Paz. The two men prepared the *mesa* that would be burnt as an offering to the *Pachamama* and the local *Apus*, *Awichas*, and *Awkis* to ask for a successful and smooth meeting. At the same time, the organisers welcomed all attendees and offered everybody coca leaves. All participants were then asked to participate in the different stages of the ritual, from the assembly of the *mesa* to its offering on the fire. It was during this meeting that, for the first time, I was directly presented with the idea of music as a guide, a school that nurtures the values and principles of reciprocity, relationality, equivalence and complementarity deeply embedded within Andean cosmology and spiritual world.

This first experience stood at odds with the narrative that emerged from the work of authors like Johnson (2010), Kohl (2010), Postero (2010a, 2010b) that reduced Indigenous symbols, imageries and ceremonies to ‘enactments of a cultural memory’ and elements of a ‘symbolic and cultural discourse.’ Relegating the practice of Andean autochthonous music alongside other Indigenous ritual ceremonies to efforts that seek to consolidate the tale of a ‘new’ diverse and tolerant national culture. Where the representation of diversity is taken for the assertion of difference and tolerance. Indigeneity they suggest is commodified and instrumentalised as part of an elaborate display of the ‘new’ national culture, detached from any particular experience, or any particular group. (Albro 2010a) Focusing on performances and activism of urban autochthonous music groups the thesis has problematised this picture.

This research suggests that groups such as the *Kurmi* or *Ayllu Ñan* articulate political vindications through performances of autochthonous music by which colonial structures and discourses are being revealed and challenged. Especially when they perform in spaces where such music had previously been denigrated or even

forbidden. These complex and often contentious experiences, as I have shown throughout the different chapters, open up spaces to vindicate and valorise Indigenous cultures and peoples. Even though there have been significant improvements, and changes in the way Indigenous cultures and peoples are treated and portrayed, colonialism and modern urban life continues to be experienced as an alienating force that further pushes Andean practices and ways of living and knowing away.

Music both in general and autochthonous music in particular, helps us problematize and rethink how we have come to understand the processes of change and decolonisation that Bolivia is experiencing. As Turino (2008a, 1) puts it “Musical sounds are powerful human resources, often at the heart of our most profound social occasions and experiences.” By performing autochthonous music and engaging with cultural, religious and political inequalities, I argue urban autochthonous groups are positioned at the interstice between different practices of anti-colonial struggle, revalorisation and reindigenisation of society, on the one hand, and processes of denigration, exoticization and co-optation, on the other. On the basis of this vantage point, I argue that looking through the lens of culture, and in particular music, allows us to rethink and problematize how colonialism continues to influence everyday practices, discourses and conditions the realms of what is deemed possible and desirable.



Figure 28: The picture shows the *Kurmi* in 2016 on their twentieth Anniversary participating at the Fiesta de San Miguel in Tiquipaya playing a Suri Sikuri. Photo courtesy of the *Kurmi*

The thesis challenges the notion that rituals for the *Apus*, *Awichas* or the performance of Andean autochthonous music can be reduced to questions of identity and politics of recognition. To do so, I suggest limits our capacity to understand what informs and makes intelligible the demands for change and decolonisation expressed by urban autochthonous musicians. As Burman (2010, 471) argues, to engage with the cosmological features of the claims to decolonise

means paying attention to those dimensions of human existence that underpin the present, giving it shape and meaning, and that inspire and make intelligible processes of change, be they guerrilla warfare or indigenous mobilization for decolonization.

Following the *Kurmi* and the *Ayllu Apu-Tunari* and their activities through the valleys of Cochabamba, the thesis continues Burman's efforts to better understand how ritual practices and activism are intertwined and inform each other. The thesis, thus, asks what is at stake politically and socially when the sounds of the *pinkillu* or the *siku* echo through the streets. In particular, the research project asked what kind of political and social imaginaries are made possible through the nurturing and practising of Andean autochthonous music by urban autochthonous music groups. The claim of 'music as nurturing entity' proposed by the urban autochthonous groups is not just an abstract idea or figure of speech aimed at challenging the dominant politics of representation and identity. Rather, I suggest to understand the claim of a 'nurturing music' literally: autochthonous music taught and opened up the curiosity of the groups leading them to enquire and engage with the different Indigenous and popular cultural, religious and political traditions.

In this sense, I propose the practice and nurturing of Andean autochthonous music is best understood as a worlding practice. A practice that engenders a world that has its foundations set in the different Andean peoples and cultures, their experiences of colonisation, their religious practices and their ways of understanding and making sense of the world itself. In other words, the thesis explored the different worlds and worlding processes invoked and enabled by urban autochthonous music groups through their activities and performances.

To be nurtured by autochthonous music, as one member of the *Kurmi* explained, meant to learn about different ways of cohabitating, different ways of relating, of being and knowing:

también hemos aprendido y entendido lo que es la convivencia de la música andina comunitaria. Y desde ese entonces [...] hemos empezado a formar como un grupo también, de intérpretes de este tipo de música y, bueno, ahora tenemos el grupo que se llama Encuentro Cultural Kurmi. Y bueno, como te digo, hemos empezado así, curiosos y ahora estamos, eh ..., un poco más crecidos pero con la misma, con los mismos principios de comunidad, queremos formar una comunidad, estamos creando nuestros propios espacios en tiempos diferentes.<sup>228</sup>

Music in many ways created a bridge with the Andean world for many urban autochthonous musicians. As I discussed in Chapter 3 and 6, these values and principles are deeply rooted within the instruments and the music itself, to the extent that the desired sound and melodies only emerge out of the interaction, complementarity and the equivalence of the different voices, therefore also meaning that no single voice or individual stands out. Turino (1993, 111), in this sense, argues that “[m]oving together and sounding together—*being in sync*—are fundamental to being together, and are crucial to feelings of belonging within a social situation.” Similarly Stobart (2002, 80) explains that:

[D]uring fieldwork in the rural Andes I discovered that music was generally presented in terms of an interface or bridge between people or realms of being, where individual musical creativity and knowledge were subsumed within broader notions of knowledge, dialogue and community. The very concepts of a ‘composer’ or ‘soloist’ were not only absent but also often actively discouraged, where equality of opportunity, consensus, and the idea of community were stressed above individual competence.

The way music is played, where the production of the global sound depends on the capacity of the musicians to play and move together and complement each other, reaffirms and renews communal ties. In other words, the practice of Andean

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<sup>228</sup> we also have learned and understood what it [is like] to live together [according to] the Andean communal music. And since then we have [...] we have also begun to form a group of interpreters of this music. And, well, now we have a group called Cultural Encounter Kurmi. And as I told you, we have started all curious, now we have grown a bit, but still with the same principles of community, we want to form a community, we are creating our own spaces in different times. (My translation) Interview with FF, 11.03.2014.

autochthonous music has created an awareness of another way of seeing, relating and being in the world, teaching the groups about Andean philosophy's foundational principles of relationality, equivalence, complementarity and reciprocity. But it also revealed a world beyond the secularist and utilitarian constraints of modern Western thought, showing an interconnected world full of deep relations that are constantly renewed and have to be carefully nurtured in each cycle. As the quote by one of the members and former leader of the *Ayllu Ñan* explains:

Que cuando tocas haces música autóctona no soplas, no votas tu aire sino que haces das tu aliento al instrumento. También [creas] tu conexión con la tierra y con el cosmos, o sea das tu aliento, tu aliento básicamente es parte de tu vida, no hay vida sin aliento, no es cierto?<sup>229</sup>

Nurturing music the musicians argue, they learned to connect with their surroundings, with the earth itself. Music in the Andean world plays a crucial role in nurturing those deep relations that maintain the fragile equilibrium of life. Music here is understood to be fundamentally relational, in the sense that it constitutes, maintains and cultivates relations. This necessitates a constant process of actualisation, and circulation and has to be maintained to live. The task of nurturing music as a decolonial project means to nurture and cultivate communal practices and relations of reciprocity and complementarity in everyday life. This 'decolonial project' in this sense, is one of relationality. For Vázquez (2012) the decolonial move is not a transcendental one, that is it cannot be one since its locus of enunciation lies within colonial modernity.

The decolonial is to understand and face the loss of relational worlds and, with them, the loss of earth. It is about the restitution of hope in the possibility of enacting relational ways of inhabiting earth, of being with human and nonhuman others and of relating to ourselves.  
(Vázquez 2017, 80)

He situates the decolonial move as a necessary step that has the capacity to open or rather destabilise colonial modernity's exclusive claim to 'the real.' In this sense, the decolonial project is necessarily situated within the frame and the limitations of

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<sup>229</sup> That when you play autochthonous music you don't blow, you don't exhale your air out, rather what you do is that you give your breath to the instrument. You also [create] your connection with the earth and with the cosmos, that is you give your breath, your breath is basically part of your life, there is no life without breath. Is it not true? (My translation) Interview with JS, 28.03.2014.

modernity. Modernity appears from a decolonial perspective “as a world of historical reality with universal pretensions, one that in its negation of earth and other worlds affirms itself as anthropocentric and Eurocentric in kind.” (Vázquez 2017, 78) The decolonial move rests on the reduction of modernity so as an ‘other-wise’ becomes possible. As Vázquez (2017, 78) further suggests “The struggle to decolonize is the struggle to undo the colonial difference; it is the struggle for the possibility of an ethical life on and with earth.”

The Andean *fiesta*, be it in the form of the patron saint festivals or the *Anata*, I suggest are a good places to start thinking ‘other-wise’ as Shilliam (2017) has challenged us to do. These *fiestas* are particularly well suited as a starting point for thinking ‘other-wise’ because they are complex social events packed with centuries of symbolism, tradition and rituals with no single narrative of their origins, effects or meanings. Moreover, they are also unique sites, constituted by actors who are informed by ‘other’ forms of reasoning which are distinct to the dominant Western-centric narratives of modernity. They are windows into a complex and intertwined social reality that otherwise is easily made invisible. In other words, these festivities are sites of many worldings, where the pluriverse becomes enacted and performed. But their many layers and competing traditions also remind us of the need to situate our approaches within the specific political, economic, social and colonial contexts. Otherwise our theoretical frameworks might contribute to the further folklorisation and cooptation of these practices, rather than to their liberation.

The process of decolonisation, of nurturing music does not mean a return to a pre-colonial past. Rather, I suggest that it should be an invitation to critically engage with the ongoing colonial structure and mechanism, in order to avoid reproducing the colonial experience as the only teleological force that governs, organises and defines the relations between the people affected by it. Doing so, I suggest, allows us to engage with those practices and experiences that do not have colonialism as their locus of enunciation, thus creating the space for other social and political imaginaries to be articulated.

Understanding decolonisation as a worlding process that opens up the possibility of an ‘other-wise’ to colonial modernity, can help us understand the challenge set by the Indigenous peoples to the rest of Bolivian society and anyone trying to discuss and theorise its social change, within different terms to those of the politics of recognition and ethnic politicking. To do so, I argue, means to take the different demands, claims,

and propositions made by the different Indigenous movements seriously, as constituting different worlding processes that operate in spite of colonial modernity; “stories that are not easily brought into the fold of modern categories.” (Blaser 2013a, 548) Decolonisation, here, is not situated in an abstract world, detached of racial, colonial, economic and power relations. As such decolonisation does not work in spite of colonial modernity, but I argue it is the exploration of a ‘beside’ or ‘other-wise to’ colonial modernity. Decolonisation starts from the premise that “the encounter with Europe is not the only factor that shaped in the past, and continues to shape in the present, the trajectories and the projects of various peoples around the world; their own stories about such trajectories and projects play a role as well.” (Blaser 2013a, 548) The call ‘to nurture and to be nurtured by music’ I suggest is an effort to take part in the struggle to decolonise, to struggle for the

liberación de la diversidad ocupada, es decir, una lucha muy concreta entre sujetos (pueblos o individuos) por el derecho (y el ejercicio real del mismo) a tener mundo propio, que quiere decir derecho a ser diferentes no sólo en lo “decorativo” sino también, y sobre todo, en lo decisivo: su forma de gobernarse, de hacer economía, de educar, de comunicarse o defenderse.<sup>230</sup> (Fornet-Betancourt 2009, 70)

A decolonial project is thus always grounded, that is, it is always situated within society, politics, economy and crucially it interacts with the earth and the landscape itself. Decolonisation, in this sense, cannot be reduced to the mere practice of *pinkillu*, or to an offering to the *Pachamama*, nor is it sufficient to evoke Indigenous cosmology and philosophy. To repeat the notion of concepts such as *Allin Kawsay* thus risks to further exoticise and commodify Indigenous knowledge practices within colonial modernity. The task then is to find ways of articulating and telling the stories in such a way that one does not try to repeat and reintroduce the ontological armatures of colonial modernity. It is important to situate Decolonisation within the ongoing nature of colonialism in Bolivia while refusing it as the only organising principle.

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<sup>230</sup> liberation of the occupied diversity, that is to say, a very concrete fight between subjects (peoples or individuals) for the right (and the real exercise of the latter) to have a world for themselves, that means to have the right to be different, not just ‘decorative’ but rather and more importantly where it matters, in their form of governing themselves, to make their economy, to educate, to communicate and defend themselves. (My translation)



The experience of the different urban musicians I interviewed highlights that the practice of autochthonous music is embedded within a broader anti-colonial struggle for liberation of the Indigenous peoples and can be thought of as a tool of the decolonial project, part of bringing into being the pluriverse. To start the decolonisation process, a different way of experiencing, of knowing and of making sense of the world is needed. Putting it in the words of Burman (2012, 117):

A few adjustments in our academic curriculums or in our lists of references are not sufficient to bring about political, theoretical, epistemological and, in the end, existential and cosmological paradigmatic revolts. We would still be reproducing the colonial images and 'truths' that the hegemonic categories of thought reduce the world to. To learn to think in and with other categories is a good start, but other categories will not make our ontological pillars shiver. For that to happen, other experiences are necessary. In other words, there is no way we are going to intellectually reason our way out of coloniality, in any conventional academic sense. There is no way we are going to publish our way out of modernity. There is no way we are going to read our way out of the epistemological hegemony.

Decolonisation in this sense, cannot be studied or made sense of as an abstract philosophical concept or utopian ideal. Decolonisation is inherently linked with different experiences of the world and informed by different ways of knowing and being in the world. In a more Fanonian sense, the anti-colonial struggle and the fight for decolonisation cannot be conveyed through a book. In the same way that freedom cannot be given, it has to be fought for, it has to be experienced. Shilliam (2015, 8) similarly suggests that "it is not possible to speak of a 'decolonial project' in the abstract, that is, as an academic enterprise separated from living knowledge traditions."

In this sense, I argue that the contribution of urban autochthonous music groups to the decolonial effort is the recognition that social change is not a theoretical experiment, but something that one has to work towards on a daily basis. Crucially, this 'alternative' world is not 'new' or alien to everyday life. Rather, the proposal that emerges from the urban autochthonous music groups is to nurture a world that is already existent. The challenge is to revalorise the practices and beliefs, knowledges and structures which already inform and shape the everyday, but which due to

colonial modernity and its individualising tendencies have been silenced and oppressed. Autochthonous music itself and the groups' performances and activities invites us to look closer at the societies we inhabit. Rather than introducing new elements or abstract ideas, this innovative contribution of the project suggests that decolonization starts with the re-evaluation and revalorisation of already ingrained practices and institutions that perhaps are often taken for granted. Thus, for Vázquez (2012, 247) the decolonial project implies is a move that seeks to open the possibility of listening.

The task of listening presents itself also as an ethical orientation, towards knowledge as *relationality*. To listen means to bridge the colonial difference, the rift that separates the visible and the invisible, 'the real' and 'the absent'. It poses the challenge to listen to those who have been disavowed and silenced.

To listen means also to respect their experiences, creating the possibility to construct together spaces where decolonial societies become possible. This is what I understand as an attempt in the sense of the Zapatistas to walk perhaps separately but together in accord with each other. To walk here means to always talk by listening to each other, to take decisions together in dialogue. (Subcomandante Marcos 2001) To listen and to nurture music therefore go hand in hand. As the Cuban philosopher Raúl Fornet-Betancourt argues; to listen means to create the possibility where the 'others culture and identity' can world itself'.

La cultura del otro, para ser lugar vivo de identidad de seres vivientes, necesita *hacerse mundo y ser mundo*. O sea que el reconocimiento de la identidad (cultural) del otro no puede reducirse a un acto de aceptación cognitiva de una diferencia más o menos abstracta que no "perturba" el orden realmente existente. Si, como bien mostró Sartre, el ser humano es un ser-en-situación, su reconocimiento conlleva reconocer sus situaciones y, con ello, sus maneras de estar en el mundo y en el tiempo. La identidad (cultural) no debe ser ni privatizada ni interiorizada. Hay que verla también como el proceso de un ser-en-situación (cultural, política, etc.), y por eso el reconocimiento de la

misma debe implicar la lucha por el mundo que necesita para desarrollarse como tal.<sup>231</sup> (Fornet-Betancourt 2009, 69)

To listen, to take the ‘other’ seriously thus, cannot be done in a passive manner, rather it has to be understood as an active effort to bring about material change in order to create the conditions of possibility where those other worlds can be worlded. As Burman concludes, ontological and epistemological concerns outlined throughout this conclusion are at the heart “of struggles over resources and power since these are simultaneously struggles over meaning, struggles over reality, over ‘what there is.’” (Burman in Blaser 2013a, 562) It follows out of this that, the process of theorisation, and conceptualising the different social and political processes, events and phenomena, as argued above, have to be situated, and cannot be reduced to a mere descriptive or naming exercise.

Based on this research, I have argued that Andean autochthonous music is an inherently communal, complex, interdependent, historically and politically situated social and ritual practice. The purpose of the different chapters has thus been to situate and contextualise the urban autochthonous music groups’ experiences and activities within the wider social, political and historical processes of Bolivia. In this sense, the chapters have focused on the different encounters and relations that made up the performances I was able to witness. The chapters have thus followed different melodies, sounds, rhythms and threads in an effort to engage with music as a constitutive element of the world within which it was being performed. As a result, each chapter has presented different webs of relations and encounters leading me to cover a broad historical period and engage with a diverse literature including works of Social Anthropology, Ethnomusicology, Education as well as Political Science and Philosophy.

The results of this research project have far exceeded the goals and objectives of the initial research project. What started as a targeted and limited engagement with Andean autochthonous music as a means of vindicating Indigenous politics, over the

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<sup>231</sup> The culture of the other, to be a living space of identity of living beings, needs to *become world* [*be worlded*] and *be a world*. So that the recognition of the (cultural) identity of the other cannot be reduced to an act of cognitive acceptance of a more or less abstract difference that does not ‘disturb’ the existing order. If, as Sartre rightly pointed out, the human being is a ‘being-in-situation’ his recognition entails recognizing his situations and, thus, his ways of being in the world and in time. [Thus,] (cultural) identity should neither be privatised nor interiorised. It has to be seen as a process of a being-in-(cultural, political, etc.) situation, as such its recognition has to imply the struggle of the world it needs to develop as such. (My translation)

years grew and became a journey that changed not only the entire project but also took me along an unexpected path. I learned to question my own assumptions about what the world is and how the world works. By engaging with music as a worlding practice, I was forced to face and problematize the limitations of my own thinking and the implicit colonial structures and logics that informed my view of politics, society and the world itself. In this sense, this project is also a journey of learning to problematize and question the truths that have constituted my own academic and personal life.

The thesis presents but a fraction of the material that came out of the thousands of hours of conversations, experiences and friendships that were forged throughout the past five years. I also do not claim that the topics and conclusions reached in this dissertation are generalizable across other cultural or musical movements or social and political circumstances. Rather, they should be read as attempts to listen in an effort to think through the political and social implications and possibilities that the practice of Andean autochthonous music can invoke in Tiquipaya and the valleys of Cochabamba more broadly. As such the aim of the dissertation has been to contribute to the task set by Anders Burman in his closing remarks to Blaser's (2013a, 61) seminal article on political ontology, when he suggests: "I remain convinced, however, that for a project of political ontology to take flight, there is a need for anchoring this thinking more explicitly and deeply in specific contexts and practices, also when engaging in theoretical debate."

Due to the institutional framework within which this research has been conducted, the scope of this project was limited in terms of the number and types of groups it was able to focus on. In particular, a wider engagement with urban autochthonous groups across different cities of Bolivia as well as a more specific engagement with the many groups composed of rural migrants would have helped to better understand the different dynamics and challenges that the practice of autochthonous music represents in urban spaces. These structural limitations were further increased with the limited literature on urban autochthonous music groups in Bolivia in general and in Cochabamba in particular. Specifically, there is a lack of literature that engages with the political and social implications of autochthonous musical practices within the Andean context. Similarly, literature on smaller towns like Tiquipaya and their historical, political, social and cultural processes is basically non-existent. As such this research project makes a small contribution to filling a vast gap in knowledge

and study. In this sense, this thesis demonstrates that in order to successfully engage in a process of decolonization that allows for the creation of *un mundo que quepan muchos mundos* (a world that fits many worlds) we cannot limit our engagement to large and prominent political, social and cultural phenomena only. Rather the task, as my research suggests, should be to look at different processes, events and movements that are part of the everyday life of the societies we as academics, as activists and as citizens are hoping to affect through our research, our activism, our lives. Many of these ideas are summed up by a member of the *Kurmi*, and it is fitting that the final words of this thesis should be his:

Nosotros tenemos que ser mucho más inteligentes de lo que han sido los colonizadores, porque los colonizadores a pura espada y agresividad han cambiado la historia de nuestros pueblos. Pero nosotros, para cambiar la historia de nuestra sociedad, creo que no vamos [a] utilizar las mismas armas. [...] Porque queramos o no, somos parte de esta historia, muchos de nosotros vivimos en las ciudades, vivimos como vive mi vecino, vivimos como todos comúnmente viven. Entonces creo que hay que ir construyendo nomás esta nueva sociedad a partir de todo lo que hemos aprendido, todo lo que sabemos y todo lo que podemos aportar ¿no? Para mí se trata de respetar tanto los instrumentos, como la música que se interpreta de todas las formas, simplemente trata de respetar todo eso.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> We have to be much more intelligent than the colonisers have been, because the colonisers have only changed the history of our peoples through sword and aggressiveness. But I believe we won't use weapons to change the history of our society.... [But] even if we don't want to be, we are part of this story, live in the cities, we live like my neighbour lives, we live like everyone else. That is why I believe that we have to go on building this new society based on everything we have learned, everything we know, and everything we can contribute, right? For me it is about respecting the instrument as much as all the ways of interpreting music. It is simply about respecting all that. (My translation) Interview with FF, 11.03.2014.

## Appendix

### List of interviews

Alejandro Martinez	Kurmi	AM	10.02.2014	Cochabamba
Ana Alicia Layme Khuna	Representative of the Iskanwaya nation.	AK	20.10.2014	La Paz
Arsenio Rojas	Jach'a Marka	AR	21.10.2014	La Paz
Cosme Lazarte		CL	18.10.2014	Cochabamba
David Ordeñas Ferrer	Taller de Proyección Cultural of the Universidad Mayor de San Andres	DO	02.04.2014	La Paz
David Tovar	Kurmi and Nayjama, former teacher of La Floresta	DT	17.01.2014	Cochabamba
Elena Fuertes Aramay	Kurmi, former teacher of La Floresta	EF	15.01.2014	Cochabamba
Favio Fernández Pardo	Kurmi	FF	18.11.2013 11.03.2014	Cochabamba
Félix Cárdenas Agilar	Viceminister of Decolonisation and Depatriarchalisation		31.04.2014	La Paz
Graciela Choque Cárdenas	Kurmi, former teacher of La Floresta	GCC	08.12.2013	Cochabamba
Guido Capcha	Kurmi, former teacher of La Floresta	GC	29.01.2014	Cochabamba
Ignacio Soqueré Tomichá	Viceminster of Interculturality		15.04.2014	La Paz
Javier Enrique Soruco Ferrufino	Ayllu Ñan	JS	28.03.2014	Cochabamba
Jorge Ayala	Satasiñani / Wilancha	JoA	11.04.2014	Cochabamba
Juan Alberto Choque	Kurmi	JAC	18.11.2013	Cochabamba
Juan Arnés	Los Kuis	JuA	16.6.2014	Bern (Switzerland)
Julio Lazarte	Inhabitant of Tiquipaya	JL	18.10.2014	Cochabamba
Mayra Capcha	Comunidad de Música Autóctona Warmi Pachakuti	MC	29.01.2014	Cochabamba

Nemesio Marianaku Kalamani	Representative of the community Taypi Ayca	NM	02.04.2014	La Paz
Orlando Chávez Ayaviri	Satasiñani	OC	13.03.2014	Cochabamba
Nestor Silvestre	Kurmi	NS	23.12.2013	Cochabamba
Richard Mujica Angulo		RM	03.04.2014	La Paz
Roberto Miguel Paniagua Perez	Kurmi	RP	18.11.2013	Cochabamba
Saúl Cruz Pardo	Mayor of the municipality of Tiquipaya		13.02.2014	Cochabamba
Sergio Sánchez	Kurmi	SeS	23.12.2013	Cochabamba
Victor Cabezas Reyes	AMA	VCR	12.04.2014	Cochabamba
Víctor Colodro Morales	Willka Mayu	VCM	02.04.2014	La Paz
Wilder Ernesto Flores Jaldin	Ayllu Ñan	WF	13.02.2014	Cochabamba
Ximena Martínez	Taller de Proyección Cultural of the Universidad Mayor de San Andres	XM	02.04.2014	La Paz
<b>Group interviews</b>				
Grupo Autóctono Mojjsa Uma			03.04.2014	La Paz
Nación Rap			01.04.2014	La Paz
Comunidad Inalmama Sagrada Coca			02.04.2014	La Paz
Comunidad 21 de Junio			29.03.2014	Cochabamba

# Meetings and Workshops organised by urban autochthonous Music groups attended

2ndo Encuentro Nacional de Comunidades, Centros Culturales y Grupos Autóctonos urbanos y rurales, interpretes de Música Ancestral Andina/Amazonica	28.09.2012	Ayllu Apu-Tunari	Cochabamba
Workshop on the question of urban communities	14.12.2013	Kurmi	Tiquipaya
Workshop on the future directions of the <i>Kurmi</i>	18.01.2014	Kurmi	Tiquipaya
Reunion para conformar de la Organización de Grupos y Comunidades Intérpretes de música autóctona del Kollasuyu	01.04.2014	Comité Impulsor para la Organización Departamental de Grupos de Música autóctona del Kullasuyu	La Paz



**Events attended organised by urban autochthonous music groups**

Closing ceremony of football tournament in Bruno Moqo	24.11.2013	Los Tigres	Bruno Moqo
Event supporting the Agrarian trade union of Montecillo	29.11.2013	<i>Kurmi</i>	Montecillo
Celebration of the Anniversary of Comunidad Laboral Santo Domingo	21.12.2013	Comunidad Laboral Santo Domingo	Quillacollo
Event supporting the Agrarian trade union of Montecillo	09.02.2014	<i>Kurmi</i>	Montecillo
Celebration of the Anniversary of the <i>Ayllu Ñan</i> Amayumpi	15.02.2014	<i>Ayllu Ñan</i>	Valle Hermoso
Carnival celebrations with the <i>Kurmin</i> in Tiquipaya	02.03.2014	<i>Kurmi</i>	Tiquipaya
Corso de Corsos	08.03.2014	<i>Ayllu Apu-Tunari</i>	Cochabamba
Carnival celebrations with the Comunidad 21 de Junio	16.03.2014	Comunidad 21 de Junio	Wayra Q'asa (Huayra K'asa)
Fiesta de San Miguel, and preparations	25-27.10.2014	<i>Kurmi</i>	Tiquipaya

## List of Festivals and Parades attended

Parade for the celebration of the Plurinational State of Bolivia	22.01.2014	La Paz
Anata Andino (Autochthonous music parade of Oruro)	27.02.2014	Oruro
Carnival of Oruro	01-02.03.2014	Oruro
Anata celebrations in village of Andamarka (First Section of the Province of Sud Carangas Oruro)	06-07.03.2014	Oruro

## Glossary

This list of terms is meant to facilitate the reading of this thesis. As a lot of the terms here listed are object of endless discussions with regard to their morphological as well as as their semantic dimensions, it is important to state that the descriptions given below are simply to show the basic meaning of each word in a descriptive way. The majority of the words are accompanied by an abbreviation, which indicates the idiomatic origin (ay = Aymara; qh = Quechua; es = Hispanic). In the last column equivalent words or words with a similar meaning are listed.

<b>Achachila</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Grandfather</i> Andean divinity which represents the high peaks and summits of a location and/or a region.	Apu, awki, machula
<b>Akapana</b> (ay)	A temple which forms part of the archaeological complex of Tiwanaku, La Paz, Bolivia. Its main characteristic is its pyramidal structure.	
<b>Altiplano</b> (es)	Altiplano refers to the high plateau, more than 4,000 meters above sea level, of the Andes. In Bolivia the departments of Oruro, La Paz and Potosí are part of the southern Andean Altiplano.	
<b>Allin kawsay</b> (qh)	<i>Lit. Good live or living well</i> This concept refers to collective wellbeing, and is generally opposed to the concept of capitalistic development. In Andean countries like Ecuador and Bolivia it has become a fundamental principle of their new political constitutions.	
<b>Anata</b> (ay)	<i>Lit: Andean carnival</i> Refers to communal celebrations and festivities related to the pre-harvest rituals, held by different Andean peoples and communities between February and March.	
<b>Apote</b>	Small village in the valley of Cochabamba, located approximately 3 km from Tiquipaya.	
<b>Apu</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Lord? Mister?</i> A divine entity of the Andean world as well as sacred places of the high peaks and the Andean mountain chain.	Achachila, awki
<b>Arca</b>	see Siku	Arka
<b>Arawi</b> (qh)	<i>Lit. Song, verse, poem</i>	

	Refers to an urban autochthonous music group named Arawi from Cochabamba.	
<b>Awayu</b> (ay)	<i>Lit. multi-coloured mantle</i> A rectangular or square piece of woven cloth, mostly used to carry different items on the back.	
<b>Awki</b> (ay, qh)	A mythological Andean character who guards his wealth in the depths of the land.	Achachila, apu
<b>Awicha</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Grandmother</i> A female divinity of the land and of sacred locations related with darkness.	Awila
<b>Ayarachi</b> (ay)	see Siku	
<b>Ayllu</b> (ay, qh)	A pre-Hispanic indigenous organisation based on the tight relative and communal bonds.	
<b>Ayllu Ñan</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Way to a community</i> Name of an autochthonous music group of the city of Cochabamba, Bolivia.	
<b>Ayni</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Reciprocal loan</i> Economical system based on cooperation and exchange of goods and services in the framework of reciprocal relationships.	
<b>Bailecito</b> (es)	Typical dance of the Bolivian valleys; result of an amalgamation of different Hispanic and Andean musical traditions.	
<b>Bolero</b> (es)	Musical genre of Cuban origin which has been fairly widespread in Latin America since the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.	
<b>Bombo</b> (es)	Musical percussion instrument. In the Andean regions of Bolivia bombos are generally fabricated out of plywood and goatskin.	Wanqara Caja
<b>Bruno Moqo</b> (es/qh)	<i>Lit. Hill which belongs to Bruno</i> Name of a community located 2 km south of Tiquipaya.	
<b>Cacique</b> (es)	Leader or principal authority of an indigenous community. In Bolivia during the colony and the first period of the republic it was the person responsible for collecting taxes from the people and organizing personal services to the authorities or the landlord.	Curaca
<b>Caja</b> (es)	Musical percussion instrument with different characteristics according to the regions of the Andes.	Bombo Wanqara
<b>Caporales</b> (es)	Folkloric dance of Bolivia inspired by Afro-Bolivian rhythms and movements.	
<b>Cargo</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Responsibility, task</i> The cargo system is part of the organisation and task distribution for the different religious festivities in the	

	Andean world. Different responsibilities alternate among the members of the community in order guarantee each year an adequate and successful celebration of the local patron saint.	
<b>Chacana</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Bridge</i> Representation of the stellar constellation of the Southern Cross; one of the most widespread symbols also known as the Inca Cross.	
<b>Chakra</b> (qh)	Piece of land or small property for family cultivation.	chajra
<b>Ch'alla</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit. Libation, sprinkling</i> In a ritual context it can refer to the act of sprinkling an offering and the ground around it with alcohol or an alcoholic beverage. It also refers to a group of rituals which can include prayer, animal sacrifices or other offerings made out of aromatic herbs and different symbolic elements.	
<b>Chicha</b>	Typical beverage of the Andean valleys which is obtained by fermentation of maize.	
<b>Cholo</b> (es)	see mestizo	
<b>CICA Ayllu</b>	Name of one of the first autochthonous music groups formed in the city of Cochabamba.	
<b>Cofradía</b> (es)	Organisation of loyal members of the Catholic Church. In the Andean region during the colony the creation of brotherhoods was also encouraged in the churches and the parish churches of the indigenous villages.	
<b>Collpapampa</b>	<i>Lit. Plain rich of saltpetre</i> Small population located 2 km southwest of Tiquipaya.	
<b>Comunario</b> (es)	Some authors have used this concept to differentiate the people who belong to an indigenous community from those who belong to a farmer union organisation.	
<b>Conquistador</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Conqueror</i> Historically in the Latin American context the term referred to the European people, who carried out the conquest of the American continent in the 15th century.	
<b>Conjunto folklórico</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Folkloric union</i> Group of musicians, who interpret popular songs typical in the country or in a region. In the Bolivian case, even during a large part of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century the folkloric groups interpreted Argentinian, Peruvian, Mexican, Caribbean and Brazilian rhythms, relegating the popular Bolivian rhythms to a second or third plane.	
<b>Convite</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Festival with drinks and food attended by a lot of guests.</i>	

	Event on the weekend leading to a festival. It is like a dry run that simulates the parade. The participation of the groups, fraternities and folkloric groups is usually high. The convite together with the novena marks the final count down to the beginning of the celebrations.	
<b>Corso de corsos</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Crew of Crews</i> In the United State it makes reference to a parade of carriages and carnival crews. In Cochabamba since the mid 1970s the carnival entry is celebrated one week after the Sunday of carnival. It enjoys a large participation of different groups and folkloric and autochthonous fraternities, in between which there is also the presence of the different units of the region of Cochabamba.	
<b>Criar – criado</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Nurture, breed, bring up, raise, care</i> In the Andean world the concepts of care and nurture are also used to refer to immaterial and spiritual aspects that constitute (relate) the lives of the individual and the community. In this sense one commonly hears people talk about nurture water, nurture life, nurture music, etc.	
<b>Criollo</b> (es)	<i>Lit. Creole</i> Historical reference to a person of European descent, who was born in a Latin-American country. During the colonial era as well as during a long period of the republican era, the creoles were part of the dominant elites and enjoyed the social, economic, politic privileges.	
<b>Cueca</b>	Dance of Hispanic, African and Indigenous origins, widespread in a lot of Latin American countries.	
<b>Cumbia</b> (es)	Originally a characteristic dance of the Caribbean coasts of Colombia and Panama. Over the course of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century it has become a widespread rhythm in the urban centres of Latin America.	
<b>Curaca</b> (qh)	<i>Lit. Bigger brother</i> Title used during the colonial period designating the political and administrative authority of a community or a group of communities.	cacique
<b>Diablada</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Dance of the devils</i> Dance created in the popular sectors of the city of Oruro, inspired by the Hispanic “autos sacramentales” of the catholic church (similar to the morality plays in England). It represents the fight of the devils (bad) and the angels (good). Over the years the Diablada has become one of the most emblematic dances of the Carnival of Oruro.	

<b>Encanto Pampa</b> (es/qh)	<i>Lit.: delighted place or flat area</i> Urbanisation, created by the drive of the migratory waves of the last decades, located around 2 km of Tiquipaya.	
<b>Encomendero</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Someone who is in charge of taking care of something or someone.</i> Person who was given an <i>Encomienda</i> .	
<b>Encomienda</b>	<i>Lit.: Package, concession</i> An early colonial institution through which the Spanish crown assigned to an individual the care and evangelization of a certain number of indigenous persons; in return the encomendero had the right to demand labour services or a determined tax which was established by the authorities of the people put under his care.	
<b>Entrada folklórica</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Parade or procession of folkloric groups</i> Perhaps the most widely known event during the Patron Saint celebrations in Bolivia. These parades are characterized by the participation of large groups or fraternities of folkloric music and dance. During the parade the dancers and musicians show their abilities, a long festive column full of colours and movement.	
<b>Fiesta patronal</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Patron Saint's Day</i> In the catholic church each temple is commended to the protection of a certain saint, to whom the faithful worship as their saint protector or patron saint. Every year the villages, cities and regions organise a number of ceremonies and festivities in order to celebrate the anniversary of their patron saint.	
<b>Forastero</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Stranger, person who comes from the outside, outsider, person who is not born in the place he lives</i> The introduction of taxes and forced labour for the indigenous population by the colonial administration after the conquest provoked several important migratory waves. The term <i>forastero</i> was used to designate migrants who were freed of the tributary obligations otherwise imposed the on Indigenous population.	
<b>Fraternidad</b> (es)	In Bolivia it refers to a group of people who perform a determined folkloric dance during the patron saint parades.	
<b>Hacendado</b> (es)	The owner of a country estate.	
<b>Hacienda</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Country estate or agricultural or farmer property</i> During Spanish colonialism, the demand of food in the mining centres on the high plateau of the Andes stimulated the emergence of big country estates in the Andean valleys.	

	In the first decades of the republic period the large landed estates not only accumulated considerable economic but also political and social power.	
<b>Huacas</b> (ay, qh)	see Waq'a	
<b>Indianismo</b>	Ideology which vindicates the political, historical and cultural struggle of the indigenous people. If <i>Indigenismo</i> refers to an attempt of non-Indians to fight for the rights of the Indians, then <i>Indianismo</i> is an effort to embody the Indian struggle by the Indians themselves.	
<b>Inka</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Pre-Hispanic people, who dominated large parts of the Andean region. Name of the highest authority of this people.</i> Currently it also refers to a dance that emerged in the city of Oruro, which represents the solemnity of the precolonial Inka imperium.	
<b>Inti Watana</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: to tie up the sun</i> Ceremonial centre in which, during the winter solstice, rituals were carried out accompanied by music and singing, which were necessary to prevent the sun from bending further to the north. Nowadays, the festivities related to the winter solstice are independent from the historically established locations.	
<b>Ira</b>	see Siku	
<b>Jach'a mallku</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: Important head</i> Name of a folkloric music group of Bolivia founded in the 1960s.	
<b>Jaqi</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: human person</i> The process of coming of age among Aymara people is not only an individual matter but has also a lot to do with the different social dynamics and rhythms that govern communal life. In this context the community, the rights and the duties of an adult person or a "jaqi" start when an individual gets married, no matter at what age.	
<b>Jula jula</b> (ay)	Andean musical instrument composed of three to four tubes (hemlock or bamboos). Generally there are five sizes. Jula jula also refers to the ensemble of musicians and dancers who play and dance to the instrument.	
<b>Juturi</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: spring</i> In the Andean world springs and other water sources are sacred locations, which have their own divinities. This is the reason why one must have respect for and make offerings to them.	



<b>K'ala Marka</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: city of stone</i> Name of a very successful and influential Bolivian folkloric ensemble, founded in the 1980s.	
<b>Kalasitasaya</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Steady stone</i> The Kalasitasaya temple forms part of the archeological complex of Tiwanaku. It is an quadrangular patio, whose walls are built of enourmes stone bricks and whose central space is occupied by the most important monoliths of the complex.	
<b>Kallawaya</b> (qh)	An Andean people/culture well known in Southamerica for their herbalist doctors and medicinal knowledge. Also denominates the region these peoples come from.	
<b>Katarismo</b>	Political Bolivian movement which emerged in the 1970s. It takes its name from the historic Aymara leader Tupak Katari.	
<b>Kena</b> (ay, qh)	see Quena	
<b>Kollasuyu</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: Faction of people called kollas</i> During the Inca reign the Kollasuyu was one of four factions or macro regions, located south of Cuzco.	
<b>Kurmi</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Rainbow</i> The group "Cultural Encounter <i>Kurmi</i> ", short <i>Kurmi</i> , is an urban ensemble which interprets Andean autochthonous music. Founded in Tiquipaya, it has become an important departmental reference of its genre.	
<b>Kusikuna</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Let's brighten up, make happy or happiness</i> Alternative school which took up the propositions of the educative project of La Floresta.	
<b>La Floresta</b>	<i>Lit.: Forest or place with abundant vegetation</i> Educational Ecological Community La Floresta of Montecillo, or short La Floresta, was a novel educational project between 1996 and 2004, which attempted to employ an alternative, innovative pedagogical experience. It was located in the community of Bajo-Montecillo.	
<b>Llajta</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: city</i> In Bolivian spoken language it refers specifically to the city of Cochabamba	
<b>Malta</b>	Medium sized tarka.	
<b>Mañazo</b>	<i>Lit.: butcher</i> In the city of Oruro, Bolivia, a group of butchers organized and motivated the first fraternity of Diablada.	
<b>Marka</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: city</i> Makes allusion to a particular ethnic identity and communal ways of organising.	

<b>Mauchi</b>	Musical genre of the Afro-Bolivian communities, performed at funerals. Name taken for an organisation of Afrodescendants in the city of Cochabamba.	
<b>Mesa/misa</b> (es)	Ensemble of different elements (mostly of animal, vegetable or mineral origin), which are meticulously prepared as an offering to the Andean divinities at traditional religious ceremonies. It is very probable that the word is borrowed, linguistically speaking, from Spanish but it is not sufficiently established if it is related to the word “mesa” (table) or “misa” (mass).	
<b>Mink’a</b> (qh)	Contract or pact of reciprocity between two or more persons to do a certain task or action. Its characteristic is that the beneficiary of the activity compensates the other participants with cash, products or services.	
<b>Mita</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Time, turn, cycle.</i> Pre-Hispanic institution of rotatory work in service for the group. The Spanish colonial administration imposed under that same term a system of forced work and services onto the indigenous population that functioned as de-facto state subsidies to different colonial economic activities.	mit’a
<b>Mitayo</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: The one who has the order of carrying out a task.</i> Indigenous people who under colonial rule were forced to go and work mostly in the mineral mines as part of their communities’ tribute to the Spanish crown	
<b>Mohoceño</b>	see Musiñu	
<b>Mojeño</b>	<i>Lit.: Native of the Mojos region (Amazonia of Bolivia)</i> Indigenous people of the spacious plan of Mojos. In the historiography of Bolivia, the Mojo region is known for the establishment of parts of the Jesuit reductions whose traces can be found in populations like Trinidad, San Ignacio and San Francisco de Mojos.	
<b>Montecillo</b>	<i>Lit.: Diminutive of woodland</i> Rural community located 2 km north of Tiquipaya. Nowadays its characteristic is a big variety of flowers, but in the past it was dedicated to cultivate cereals and tubers.	
<b>Morenada Central</b>	<i>Lit.: Central Morenada</i> One of the most famous and prestigious dance groups of the Carnival of Oruro is the Fraternidad Morenada Central de Oruro. In Tiquipaya as well as in other places of the country, groups affiliated themselves with this fraternity so that they could benefit from their prestige and take part during the parades at the carnival of Oruro.	

<b>Musiñu</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Native of the Mohosa location</i> A duct flute wind instrument which can measure between 65 and 150 cm. It differs from others of its kind, because it has an additional small tube with less calibre (through which one blows) positioned at the upper part of the instrument.	Moseño Moceño Mohoseño
<b>Nayjama</b>	<i>Lit.: like me</i> The Community Nayjama (short Nayjama), is an autochthonous music group of the city of Sucre, Bolivia.	
<b>Pachakuti</b>	<i>Lit.: time and space investment</i> The change the people and communities of the Andean world are waiting for. The word implies a renewal of time and the beginning of a new phase that can come after a natural disaster or serious socio-political disturbances.	
<b>Pacto de Unidad</b>	<i>Lit.: Pact of unity</i> Alliance of Indigenous organizations and movements of Bolivia. Even though the most visible paper of this alliance was published during the never-ending deliberations of the constituent assembly (2006-2008), the meetings and the agreements have been the result of a long process of deliberation among the Indigenous organisations. This alliance consolidated its position within political landscape as the most influential social movement	
<b>Pachamama</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: Mother earth</i> The most important divinity within the religious conceptions of the Andean peoples. The rituals to this divinity, initially located in rural areas and strongly related with agricultural production, nowadays are becoming more and more frequent in the urban zones.	
<b>Pasante</b> (es)	The person responsible of organizing or covering the costs of a certain patronal or a religious festival.	
<b>Peña folklórica</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Folkloric club</i> Club which sells food and beverages and also has live music acts every night. During the 1960s, the new ensembles of Bolivian folkloric music became the main attraction of a club called "Peña Naira", which soon was imitated throughout Bolivia.	
<b>Phala</b>	see Siku	
<b>Phujllay</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: Game</i> The carnival in the valley of the Indigenous peoples of Tarabucu in Chuquisaca, Bolivia.	
<b>Phusipia</b>	see Kena	

<b>Pinkillu</b> (ay)	A duct flute wind instrument. It is generally made of hemlock (a kind of bamboo).	Pinquillo Pinkillo Pinkollo
<b>Pollera</b>	A pleated skirt worn throughout the Andes by indigenous and non-indigenous women. In many places it has replaced woven dresses that were used before colonization.	
<b>Poncho</b> (qh)	A garment which consists of a rectangular fabric with an opening in the middle. In the Andean regions ponchos are fabricated in familiar looms and are used for protection against the cold and rain. The colours of this garment can show the belonging to a certain community; also the circumstances in which is used can show a hierarchical range of authority.	
<b>Pongueaje</b> (es)	Exploitation systems in the <i>haciendas</i> , in which an indigenous person received a minimal plot of land to construct his hut and cultivate the basic products he needed for the subsistence of his family. In return he had to work, with his colleagues, the land of the patron. Besides, he and his wife had to periodically present domestic services in the house of the patron.	
<b>Preste</b>	see Pasante	
<b>Pueblo Real</b>	see Reducciones	
<b>Pusisuyu</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Four macro regions</i> Ensemble of autochthonous music of Cochabamba. The name makes allusion to the Inca Empire, also known as the empire of the four macro regions.	
<b>Q'ara</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: peeled</i> Term used by the Andean indigenous population to call the white man.	
<b>Q'ipi</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: piece of luggage, tied, load</i> The traditional Andean way of carrying something with oneself, like a luggage. It consists of wrapping up one's load in a rectangular cloth (see Awayu) in order to carry it on the back.	qepi q'epi
<b>Qhantu</b> (qh)	Musical ensemble of the Kallawaya region. They play Sikus of different sizes as well as drums which hang from their shoulders, producing solemn melodies. To the rhythm of the music, dancing couples are formed who advance in wiggly lines or make turns around the musicians.	Kantu Khantu Qantu
<b>Quena</b> (ay, qh)	Musical wind instrument which consist of a tube with six holes.	Kena Qina

<b>Q'iwa</b> (ay, qh)	A small tarka, which has the high voice in the musical group.	
<b>Q'uwa</b> (qh)	The aromatic plants which are part of an Andean ritual offerings as well as the whole complex ritual offering dedicated to the divinities.	Q'oa
<b>Ranchera</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: settler</i> Musical genre characteristic of Mexican folklore, which has become very popular across Latin America.	
<b>Runa</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: man or human person</i> For the Quechua person coming of age a means to be able to assume responsibilities within the community.	
<b>Reducciones</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: reductions</i> Administrative union created during the colonial period in an effort to evangelize and keep meticulous control of the indigenous people.	
<b>Sajra</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: malign, bad</i> Harmful spirit which inhabits certain places, like old trees, abysses etc.	
<b>Samba</b>	Traditional dance from Argentina, Uruguay and the south of Brazil.	Zamba
<b>Siku</b> (ay, qh)	Musical wind instrument. Its main characteristic is the "dialogue" or "interplay" between ira and arca. They are the designations used for both rows that make up one instrument. The ira is made out of six or seven tubes and usually is the one that guides. The arca is made out of seven or eight tubes and follows the lead of the ira.	
<b>Sirinu</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: Calm</i> Andean divinity of music who lives in certain special places, like the current of water, the forest or cracks where sounds are generated.	Sireno
<b>Suma qamaña</b> (ay)	see Allin kawsay	
<b>Sumaj kawsay</b> (qh)	see Allin kawsay	
<b>Tarka</b> (ay)	Musical wind instrument of the family of the pinkillu, made of on piece of wood. Together with the siku it is the most popular instrument in the Southern Andes.	tarqa
<b>Tarkeada</b> (ay)	Musical ensemble who play the tarka. To guarantee that a presentation is successful the group has to be built of different sizes of tarkas and at least one drum.	
<b>Tata</b>	<i>Lit.: Father</i>	

(qh)		
<b>Tayka</b>	Tayka is the big tarka which usually represents the dominant sound of the tarka group.	
<b>Tinku</b>	<i>Lit.: Encounter</i> Folkloric representation of different Indigenous rituals and festive traditions in the North of Potosí.	
<b>Tiwanaku</b> (ay)	The most famous archaeological complex in Bolivia. Belongs to a Pre-Inca culture, yet until this day it has not been possible to determine who the constructors were.	
<b>Todosantos</b>	<i>Lit.: All saints</i> Festival in honour of the deceased, which is celebrated on the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> of November. Even though the festival is of Christian tradition, the Andean peoples have included their own concepts of death into the different rituals of this festival.	
<b>Toqoro</b> (ay, qh)	Plant with thick and large canes used to make musical instruments.	
<b>Tropa</b>	<i>Lit.: Troop</i> Ensemble formed by musicians who play the same instrument.	
<b>Tunari</b>	Highest peak of the oriental sector of the Andean mountain range, it reaches 5.200 meters above sea-level. For the indigenous peoples the Tunari is a protecting divinity, an Apu (see Apu). Because of its significance, the autochthonous musical ensembles took up its name for their umbrella organization: Ayllu Apu Tunari.	
<b>Tutuma</b> (ay, qh)	<i>Lit.: Calabash</i> Tree typical for subtropical places. The fruits resemble a courgette and once ripe, they are cut in half, the flesh is taken out and the peel is taken off. It is used as a glass to drink water or any other liquid.	
<b>Urkupíña</b> (qh)	<i>Lit.: It is already on the hill</i> Religious image, worshiped in the city of Quillacollo, Cochabamba. The image depicts the Virgin of the Assumption whose festival is on August 15 <sup>th</sup> to which hundred-thousands of faithfuls come from all over the country and the world. The parade of the festival of Urkupíña is one of the three largest parades in the country.	
<b>Valluno</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: Inhabitant of the valleys</i> In popular spoken language it has become a synonym for a person who comes from Cochabamba.	

<b>Vals – valsecito</b> (es)	<i>Lit.: waltz</i> Music and dance typically from Europe and very appreciated by the high society of the American continent.	
<b>Virgen del Socavón</b>	<i>Lit.: Virgin of the subsidence</i> The virgin of the Candlemas has become the saint protector of the mining workers of Oruro, therefore the biggest festival is dedicated to her.	Mamita del Socavón
<b>Waq'a</b> (ay, qh)	Sacred place believed to be inhabited by an Andean divinity. It can also mean the local divinity.	
<b>Wanqara</b> (ay)	Andean percussion instrument, fabricated of wood and deer- or goat-skin.	Bombo
<b>Warisata</b> (ay)	Place located on the coast of the Titicaca lake. Here the pilot experience “Escuela-Ayllu”, Ayllu-School, took place, which revolutionized the pedagogical precept of school education in Bolivia and Latin-American.	
<b>Wathiya</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Food cooked in the middle of ember</i> Traditional meal from the Andean region. It consists of meat, potatoes and plantains cooked inbetween hot rocks in a hole.	
<b>Wayñu</b> (ay, qh)	Andean musical genre, very common. It is danced in couples, holding hands, following the steps with small jumps and turning around making different figures.	
<b>Wilancha</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Blood ritual</i> Autochthonous music group of Cochabamba.	
<b>Willka</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Sun</i> Old Aymara name. Nowadays the term Inti is more frequently used to name the sun.	
<b>Willka kuti</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: Winter solstice</i> The arrival of winter in the southern hemisphere is received, in the Andean communities, with rituals and specific celebrations, whose purpose is to prevent that the sun keeps decreasing. With this they secure the return of the sun to warm up and give life back to the earth.	
<b>Wiñay Marka</b>	<i>Lit.: Eternal city</i> Urban autochthonous group of La Paz.	
<b>Wiphala</b>	The Wiphalas had has become from the 1980s and in particular during the 1990s one of the main symbols of the Indigenous movements and organisations.	
<b>Yatiri</b> (qh)	Religious specialist who carries out offerings of gratefulness to mother earth as well as healing practices based on rituals and the use of medical herbs.	
<b>Yaqha</b> (ay)	<i>Lit.: The other, different</i> A reference to the white man.	

<b>Yungas</b> (es)	Hot and humid valleys which are formed in the Andean folds which descent toward the coast and the Amazon.	
<b>Zampoña</b>	see Siku	



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